

**MINUTES OF THE SOUTHWAY CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING
HELD AT 10.00AM, TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2009 AT
ASPEN HOUSE, 825 WILMSLOW ROAD, DIDSBURY**

Present

Representatives from Burnage North Tenants Association x 2 (1 in the Chair)
Representatives from Parrs Wood T & R A x 2
Representatives from Didsbury West Estate R A x 2
Representatives from Burnage South T A x 2
Owner Occupier Representative
Tenant Board Member

In Attendance

Karen Mitchell, Chief Executive, Southway
Jane Gant, Director of Asset Management & Regeneration, Southway
Ray Smith, Director of Neighbourhood Services, Southway
Dennis Wellington, Head of Property Services, Southway
Devon Poyser, Regeneration Project Manager, Southway
Maureen Ward, Customer Involvement Manager, Southway
Tina Murphy, Tenant Liaison Officer, Southway

Apologies:

Deputy Owner Occupier Representative
Tenant Board Member
Didsbury East Ward Councillor

Item	Subject	Action
1	Welcome and Introductions	
1.1	The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all present.	
2	Apologies	
2.1	Please see above.	
3	Minutes of the Last Meeting (10.02.09)	
3.1	The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 February 2009 were presented for consideration and approval.	
3.2	The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record of the previous meeting.	
4	Matters Arising	
4.1	(4.7 – Matters Arising – Website Version of Minutes) Maureen Ward advised the group that the revised minutes of the December 2008 meeting are now on the Southway website as agreed. Further minutes will be added as they are approved.	
4.2	(4.8 – Matters Arising – Community Benefit) Steve Fanning was unable to attend the meeting but will be in attendance at the April meeting to provide an update on Community Benefit.	Steve Fanning

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4.3	(4.10 – Matters Arising – Carbon Monoxide Detectors) Jane informed the group that she had looked into the cost of providing carbon monoxide detectors to all Southway homes and the total would be £200,000. Jane explained that there is currently no budget available for this but added that Southway are proposing to research this issue and establish what best practice is alongside the review of the gas servicing policy due in 2009.	Jane Gant
4.4	(5.1 – Home Improvement Programme) Jane advised that the Regeneration Team are now validating customer satisfaction questionnaires through a 10% sample. To date the validation work has confirmed the results that the contractors have issued through to Southway.	
4.4.1	A member of the group stated that she had experienced some problems with Bramalls during improvement work to her property and asked if the sample had included visiting customers where they had given scores. Jane confirmed that the sample validation had included visits to tenants who had given low, medium and high scores to check that the information was accurate.	
4.4.2	Jane added that the problems with the sub contractors referred to had been resolved and they would not be returning to site. Jane agreed to clarify in the minutes which contractors were involved. (Bramalls had definitely removed sub contractors from site.)	
4.5	(5.5 – Home Improvement Programme) Devon Poyser confirmed that the KPI report had been presented at the Home Improvement Programme Service Improvement Group.	
4.5.1	It was noted that that the Home Improvement Programme Service Improvement Group had agreed that the KPI report should be presented on a quarterly basis rather than each month and said that he would like to propose the same for the Consultative Group. There were no objections raised.	
4.5.2	(5.7 – Home Improvement Programme) Devon informed the group that he did not have any feedback on the wastage issue raised at the last meeting but would discuss the details with the member who raised it outside of the meeting.	
4.6	A discussion took place about floor covering. Devon confirmed that floor tiles are no longer used. A representative from Burnage asked if vinyl will be what is used in future. Jane agreed to provide confirmation at the next meeting.	
4.6.1	(5.10 – Home Improvement Programme) Devon confirmed that the Lord Group had been on site at the Brayside and Catterick scheme on a daily basis.	
4.7	(6.3 – Southway Information Leaflet) Ray Smith advised that the	

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4.8	<p>issue regarding subletting is still being investigated.</p> <p>(10.1 & 10.3 – Tenant Services Authority (TSA) National Conversation) Maureen confirmed that an event took place on 4 March. Attendance was low but a good discussion had taken place and completed questionnaires and facilitator feedback had been sent to the TSA.</p>	
5	<p>Home Improvement Programme Update</p> <p>5.1 Jane Gant distributed the Home Improvement Programme Report and went through the document in detail.</p> <p>5.2 Jane explained that the layout of the report had been altered slightly since the last meeting. Jane apologised for the late delivery of the document and said that in future it will be sent out with the agenda to give members of the group time to read it prior to the meeting.</p> <p>5.3 Jane referred to the table within the report which shows the number and types of improvements completed to date.</p> <p>5.4 A member of the group asked if a '0' indicated that no work had commenced. Jane confirmed that this was the case.</p> <p>5.5 Jane advised that the Here to Help scheme was running really well and had proved very positive.</p> <p>5.6 Jane said that the report will continue to include information about compliments received by Southway from customers. A number of compliments were received during January and February and one of these was included in the report. Jane added that Devon Poyser has recently received a compliment from a tenant for his work.</p> <p>5.7 Devon advised that the programme work is going very well and customer satisfaction levels are currently 3% above the target set. There has been some low scoring of the 'landlord's services' which is due to tenants not seeing Southway staff out on the ground. Steps are being taken to improve this.</p> <p>5.8 Jane stated that the figures fluctuate month on month but they are excellent. Jane pointed out that one area of the table should be red, as the number of apprentices in place is below target. Devon agreed to amend the table to reflect this. At present there are 21 apprentices. This is a disappointing area for Southway and Jane explained that the contractors have not been as proactive as they should have been. A number of interviews are being held in the near future which will hopefully result in six new placements.</p> <p>5.9 A representative from Parrs Wood T & R A asked if there was any particular reason why there was a problem and wondered if it was down to certain attitudes. Devon explained that it wasn't</p>	

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5.10	<p>and relayed a positive story about a group of youths in Burnage who were being checked by the police but are now on board with finding work. Jane said that more could be done and will be done to increase the number of apprentices.</p> <p>A member from the Burnage area asked if any of the apprentices had left since starting. Devon advised that there had been no leavers and Jane added that two of the apprentices have won awards.</p>	
6	<p>Tenants Voice Panel</p> <p>6.1 Karen Mitchell referred to the Tenants Voice Panel consultation paper that had been circulated again with the agenda and asked if anyone had any initial comments on the principal of the proposal.</p> <p>6.2 A member of the group asked if training would be provided for members of the panel as she felt it was going to be a very demanding role. Karen advised that training would be arranged and could take place a week or two before each meeting.</p> <p>6.3 The general view was that the terms of reference were too broad and included too many topics. It was suggested that each meeting is themed.</p> <p>6.4 Karen was asked why the panel did not include owner occupiers. Karen advised that the terms of reference is in draft format and can be amended. The group thought that some representation should be made from leaseholders and owner occupiers, particularly on issues such as the environment. Karen agreed with this and added that this representation may need to be restricted as it is tenants who pay rent which gives them a different relationship with Southway than others who live in the community.</p> <p>6.5 The Chair asked what powers would be delegated from the Board and said he was unsure about whether this was necessary. Karen explained that it was more about the Board listening to the views of the panel and responding to recommendations.</p> <p>6.6 A member of the group asked if any issues could come to this group from the panel prior to going to the Board. Karen explained that as there would be members of the Consultative Group on the panel that would not be necessary. Karen also stated that by having that additional tier it would delay any actions.</p> <p>6.7 Karen explained that the panel would not be expected to look at services in depth but have a more general look at the standards of service. It was stated that if it is decided that the meetings are themed it would take a year to cover three subjects.</p>	

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6.8	Karen advised that a provisional date of 16 May has been set for the first meeting. This is a Saturday. This date has been decided to fit in with the Board timetable and the Residents' Conference.	
6.9	<p>The group agreed that the key issues the panel should look at during the first year are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Environment • Rents • Repairs and Home Improvements • Anti-Social Behaviour <p>It was agreed that topics such as the environment and rents would be good starting points as they are not currently subjects covered by specific groups.</p>	
6.10	A discussion was held about how the group should be made up. It was generally felt that the membership should be left open initially as some people may want to attend for some subjects but not others.	
6.11	Karen asked what people thought about the idea of offering a £10 gift token as an incentive. It was agreed that as the meetings would not be 'closed' this was no longer an option.	
6.12	Karen agreed to take the group's comments back to the Governance Group and the Board and report back at the next meeting.	Karen Mitchell
7	<p>Southway Connect</p> <p>7.1 Ray advised the meeting that there are now less than four weeks to go until Southway Connect goes live. Ray said that since the last update the furniture and IT systems have been put in place.</p> <p>7.2 Ray informed the meeting that Southway held a competition amongst staff to find 'the voice of Southway' and the winner was Andrea Cohen. Ray explained that Andrea's voice will be heard by tenants when they are waiting for their call to be taken. It will be a recorded message relaying information about Southway.</p> <p>7.3 The group thought it would be good for them to meet Andrea and it was agreed that they could do so at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>7.4 Ray advised that training is underway for the staff transferring from On Call and progress is being made with the recruitment of new staff. Shortlisted staff will be invited to an on-site assessment day later this month which will include taking test calls.</p> <p>7.5 The Mystery Shopping Team will be carrying out an exercise prior to go live to help to test the Connect service. A number of scenarios will be used.</p>	

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7.6	A member of the group asked if there would be a new phone number. Ray explained that there would be a new number and this will be fully publicised prior to the service going live. A leaflet will go to all tenants and Southway vehicles will be re-livered with the number.	
7.7	Ray suggested that members of the group have a look at the Southway Connect area and meet Andrea Cohen at the end of the meeting. This was agreed.	
8	<p>Repairs</p> <p>8.1 Dennis Wellington asked the group if he could have ten minutes to talk to them about the existing repairs timescales for each category of repair and a proposed change to them. The group agreed.</p> <p>8.2 Dennis advised that the introduction of Southway's new repairs management system presented an opportunity to review the existing repair priorities, compare those with best practise elsewhere and make recommendations for any proposed changes.</p> <p>8.3 Dennis distributed a paper to the group which outlined the current timescale for the different repair categories and the proposed timescales. Dennis went through the paper in detail and explained why the changes were being proposed. At the end of the presentation, Dennis summarised the potential positives and negatives to the changes as highlighted below:</p> <p><u>Positives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent repairs will be simplified as there will no longer be 3 sub-categories within the urgent repairs category • Routine works will be completed quicker • The slight extension of the major works priority deadline will allow for better resource planning and work programming. <p><u>Negatives:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major work completions may take longer, however it was noted that the need for this type of work should, over the next couple of years be reducing due to the positive impact of the home improvement programme. <p>8.4 Dennis asked if there were any comments or questions. Nothing specific was raised and the group stated they were happy with the proposed changes. Dennis advised that the proposals will now be presented to Board for approval in March.</p>	

Item	Subject	Action
9	Community Benefit	
9.1	As previously reported, Steve Fanning was unable to attend today so this item was deferred until the next meeting.	
10	Any Other Business	
10.1	<u>Rent Increase</u>	
10.1.1	Clarification was sought about the amount rents had increased by. Ray explained the formula and advised that the letter sent to all tenants about the rent increase gave a full explanation of the process used.	
10.2	<u>Parking Issues</u>	
10.2.1	A representative from the West Didsbury area asked that it be recorded that there are major parking problems on the Didsbury West Estate due to car owners parking both inconsiderately and dangerously when going to Fletcher Moss Football Club. Drivers are double parking on Mersey Crescent and the turning circles on the small avenues are being used for parking. It was stated that an emergency vehicle would not be able to get through and a bad accident could occur.	
10.2.2	Both the police and the football club have been contacted but the issue remains unresolved. It was suggested that the Highways Department is contacted.	
10.3	<u>Garden Gates</u>	
10.3.1	A member of the group asked if there is currently a garden gate scheme. Devon advised that some gates are replaced during an external works home improvement scheme.	
10.4	<u>Mystery Shopping</u>	
10.4.1	Maureen advised that the Mystery Shopping Team was going to be involved in testing the new Southway Connect service but explained that numbers on the team had reduced due to ill health and asked if anyone from this group would be willing to get it involved. Maureen gave a brief explanation of what was involved. Three members of the group volunteered to join the team.	
10.5	<u>Showers</u>	
10.5.1	Jane Gant informed the group that a common fault had been detected on Red Ring showers. The issue is being dealt with but Jane wanted the group to be aware of the issue in case they receive any queries about this.	
10.5.2	Jane advised that she did not know the specific details but would provide further information.	

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10.6	<u>Recycling Issues</u>	Jane Gant
10.6.1	Ray Smith sought approval from the group for an officer from the City Council's Campaigns Team to attend the next meeting to talk about recycling issues. The group agreed.	Maureen Ward
10.7	<u>Southway Stories</u>	
10.7.1	A copy of the most recent edition of Southway Stories was requested. Maureen agreed to send one out and to add details of owner occupiers to a mailing list so that they receive it as a matter of course in the future.	Maureen Ward
10.8	<u>Board Recruitment</u>	
10.8.1	Karen Mitchell asked for volunteers to be on the interview panel to recruit a new Tenant Board Member. The position was recently advertised and the closing date for applications was now closed. Three members of the group volunteered.	
10.8.2	It was agreed that Maureen would contact any groups not represented today to ask if they also want to nominate somebody to be on the interview panel.	Maureen Ward
11.0	Date of Next Meeting – 14 April 2009	
11.1	The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 April, 2009 at 10.00am in the Board Room, 2 nd Floor, Aspen House, 825 Wilmslow Road, Didsbury, Manchester, M20 2SN.	