

## CITY HOUSING CONSULTATION GROUP

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 2002 AT CARDINAL SQUARE

#### PRESENT

Elaine Jackson, Chair	Derby Association of Community Partners (DACP)
Gwen Stubbley	DACP
Sylvia Hyde	DACP
Ken Whitehead	DACP
John Millar	DACP
Lyn Gadsby	Leaseholders' Representative
Councillor Richard Gerrard	Derby City Council
Jonathan Geall	Derby City Council (part-meeting)
John Bloxsom	Derby Homes (DH)
Richard Smail	DH
Maria Murphy	DH (part-meeting)
Phil Davies	DH (part-meeting)
Fiona Henchley	DH (part-meeting)

APOLOGIES - Nita Murphy, Dennis Rees, Ray Bradbeer, Maureen Parker, Jack Wray

1. Elaine welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. All those present introduced themselves.
2. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed for accuracy subject to several spelling amendments.

#### 3. MATTERS ARISING

##### **Housing and Social Inclusion briefing**

Elaine is getting copies, from Glynis, of the Housing Strategy in relation to Black and Ethnic Minority Groups.

##### **Invite to a representative from the Area Neighbourhood Team (ANT) to this meeting**

It is believed no invitation has been issued.

##### **DACP Proposals for new offices and resource centre**

Elaine wrote to Phil Davies.

**ACTION** - To check if Jonathan Geall has invited ANT to the next meeting.

#### 4. TO AGREE ANY LATE ITEMS

John Bloxsom explained to the new members of CHCG, that this agenda item is an opportunity to bring up any points from the Board documents circulated that members would like more information about.

Elaine raised an item concerning an individual who wished to move. Richard there was a presentation recently on Home Release at CHCG Sub. The Allocations Policy is currently under review and an update can be requested for the next CHCG Sub meeting. Meantime, the details of this particular case can be checked with Maria Murphy.

**ACTION** - An update on the Home Release procedure to be an agenda item for the next CHCG Sub meeting.

#### PART A - RETAINED HOUSING SERVICES

#### 5. UPDATE ON REDUCTION IN HOUSING APPLICATIONS BACKLOG AT THE HOUSING OPTIONS CENTRE

Cllr Gerrard said the backlog is down from 14 weeks to 5 weeks and the Centre has now reopened 5 days a week. However, the situation continues to be very closely monitored. In reply to Jonathan, Elaine said the issues raised at the last meeting have been satisfactorily resolved.

## **6. UPDATE ON REDEVELOPMENT OF GLOSSOP STREET AREA AND HARVEY ROAD SITE**

### **Harvey Road site**

Jonathan said the brief for redevelopment proposals goes to the next Council Cabinet on 5 November for approval as the preferred option. The proposed scheme will include affordable homes, homes for sale and consist of the type of properties currently in short supply in the area.

### **Glossop Street area**

Jonathan said 92 properties have been demolished and proposals are being looked at to get the area redeveloped as soon as possible bearing in mind the needs of people on the Joint Housing Register, consultation with local residents and environmental issues. An environmental consultation agency is likely to be used for advice on the best way to proceed with the green area development. Any housing built will be looking to "plug the gap" on the type of properties not currently available in the area. Consultation with local residents is also under way. Of the 2,000 households consulted approximately a third participated. Local residents will be kept informed as the scheme progresses but there are no definite time scales at the moment. In reply to John Millar, Jonathan said his concern about any relocation of species could be included in the brief to the environmental consultants.

## **7. PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE COUNCIL'S HOUSING ALLOCATIONS POLICY**

Already briefly touched on in Item 4. Jonathan said the review is largely on the back, nationally, of the requirements of the Homelessness Act and locally as an impetus of Derby Homefinder. The first step will be a paper highlighting the needs to the Council cabinet on 19 November laying out the proposed timetable for the Review and Consultation arrangements. Consultation is likely to include an article in Housing News, asking for comments, consultation with the DACP and Housing partners. Jonathan suggested the Group could ask Lisa Callow to attend the next meeting to explain what is happening.

## **8. UPDATE ON CITY-WIDE IMPLEMENTATION OF DERBY HOMEFINDER**

Jonathan said there is a lot of support for the Derby Homefinder system and it is currently being estimated how much it would cost for it to go city-wide. Jonathan suggested this item be included on the agenda of the next few meetings. Maria said there are plans to use Homefinder to advertise a property from Cowsley, Old Sinfen and Osmaston to gauge the level of interest expressed in these previously hard to let properties.

The meeting then discussed problems with hard to let properties in 'unpopular' areas and it was felt that DH is not good at getting publicity for areas like Sinfen where positive steps have been taken to improve the area. Jonathan agreed this is a good point and said the Council and all partner agencies have prioritised the Normanton, Osmaston and Sinfen areas for a joint approach and could plug what's good about these areas. Elaine said she felt a Surestart scheme for the Sinfen area would be extremely beneficial.

**ACTION** - Homefinder Update to be included on future CHCG agenda

## **PART B - DERBY HOMES REPORTS**

## **9. SEARCH FOR PREMISES FOR DERBY TENANTS RESOURCE CENTRE**

The DACP have set up a sub-group to progress this but problems are being experienced finding central premises, with suitable facilities, with the money that is thought to be available. The DACP can stay in Cardinal Square until June 2003 but would prefer to be gone before this. Various locations were discussed including the premises in Canal Street and Grove House. Jonathan will look to see how feasible a move to Grove House would be as some enthusiasm was expressed for this venue. Richard will progress a guarantee on the amount of funding that will be provided. It was suggested by Cllr Gerrard that DACP members should visit Grove House.

**ACTION** - Jonathan to consider the feasibility of DTRC move to Grove House  
Richard to let the DACP know exact funding available

## **10. CITY HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLANS - CAN THE ROLE FOR HOMEOWNERS BE DEFINED?**

Elaine said clarification is needed on what homeowners who are CHIP representatives for their Panel can

do and what they can't do. Whilst it is not a problem at the moment, due to the small number of CHIP representatives who are also homeowners, concern has been expressed that there could come a day when all the representative at a CHIP meeting are homeowners and it will be their decision how to spend Housing money for environmental improvements. Richard pointed out that the new Housing Boards will be made up of nominated tenants and leaseholders only. It was suggested that from next year owners will not be eligible to vote as CHIP representatives. Agreed that this issue needs to be clarified.

#### **11. TENANT PARTICIPATION STRUCTURE REVIEW UPDATE**

Richard outlined the current situation and distributed a draft copy of the "Did You Know" newsletter which will be delivered to all Panel members and staff. A few suggestions to improve the newsletter were made.

The new structure will be introduced in April 2003. New leaflets, visits to panels and training will be arranged over the next few months.

**Items 12 to 18 refer to Derby Homes Board Reports to the October meeting.**

#### **12. TENANT BOARD MEMBER ELECTION RESULTS**

After a contested election in the South-West area Audrey Marples was voted on to the Board with effect from the Annual General meeting on 31 October 2002. The period of office for Board members will be determined at the AGM. John thanked all who stood during the election process.

#### **13. BOUNDARIES FOR FUTURE TENANT BOARD ELECTIONS**

It is proposed to change the boundaries for future tenant board elections to fit in with the Ward and Area Panel boundaries. Similarly, local Housing Offices will be changing their boundaries in January 2003.

#### **14. LOCAL HOUSING BOARDS**

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) have accepted the following proposals by Derby Homes for the Local Housing Board terms of reference:

- Local Housing Boards will be set up on a shadow basis in February and March 2003, becoming established in April 2003
- An information pack will be made available for Panel members to find out what will be involved. Each tenant and leaseholder panel member will be eligible to join the Board
- First meetings planned are 6 February 2003 for the North Local Housing Board and 20 February 2003 for the South Local Housing Board. The main Board vice-chairs will chair these meetings with Paul Bayliss for the South and Afzal Shabir for the North
- The Local Housing Boards will have a close link to the main DH Board and are effectively sub-committees

In reply to John Millar's concern that panel members are unsure about what is happening with all the Boards and Panels, Phil said it means each area covered by a local Housing Office will have:

- One local office (specific to that area)
- One local Panel (specific to that area)
- One Local Housing Board (shared with others in either the South or North)
- One Main Board (shared with the rest of Derby City)

#### **15. REVIEW OF IMPROVING AND MAINTAINING COUNCIL HOMES**

The review has been completed and an Action Plan agreed. It will aim to deliver the Homes Pride programme. Details were publicised in Housing News including the proposals to get 100% take up.

#### **16. ALMO INSPECTION REPORT**

The interim report has now been submitted and comments are due back to the Inspectors by 7 November. When the final version of the report has been completed a press release will be issued.

## **17. LOCAL HOUSING OFFICE OPENING TIMES**

The new opening times will come into effect on 4 November. New signs/publicity have been sent out. The smaller 9 offices will be opening from 9.00am-1.00pm on a daily basis.

## **18. LATE ITEMS**

### **a. Derby Homes Management Accounts.**

This report outlines how DH fees will be spent, including £75,000 on the Best Value Action Plan. Extra staffing is also proposed including two more Tenant Participation Officers, a Committee Support Officer, Training Manager and Policy and Performance Officer.

The additional costs needed for uniforms will be paid from next year's fee income, however £100,000 has not been allocated and it is proposed to target it on anti-social behaviour and youth initiatives. Additionally, Capital Funds will be available for staffing costs to employ staff for the Homes Pride programme.

### **b. Supporting People Proposals**

This report outlines proposals for 20 staff to support 250 tenants who are in need of support to hold onto their tenancies. The scheme will need to have generated sufficient income by 31 March 2003 and it is anticipated that 70 tenants will be supported by then. £150 a week will be charged, this charge is eligible for Housing Benefit. This will generate £500,000. After 1 April the costs are dropped and Supporting People funds will pay for the service. All tenants involved need to sign a 'deed of variation' for their tenancy and agree to take part in this scheme.

## **19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 26 November 2002, at 2.00pm, in the Board Room.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

To check if Jonathan Geall has invited ANT to the next meeting

An update on the Home Release procedure to be an agenda item for the next CHCG Sub meeting

Homefinder Update to be included on future CHCG agenda

Jonathan to consider the feasibility of DTRC move to Grove House

Richard to let the DACP know exact funding available