

## MINUTES OF CENTRAL HOUSING COMMUNITY NETWORK MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2011 AT 11.00 A.M. IN N.I.H.E. H.Q., BELFAST

PRESENT:            B. Holmes            S.C.N.I.  
                      C. McDaid            S.C.N.I.  
                      M. Watt              S.C.N.I.  
                      H. Walker            N.I.H.E.  
                      G. Flynn             N.I.H.E.  
                      L. Sproule            N.I.H.E.  
                      H. Phillips           South East  
                      P. McQuillan        North East  
                      J. Hunter             North East  
                      J. Kelly              Belfast  
                      J. Morgan            Belfast  
                      A. Hanlon            South  
                      G. Blevins           South  
                      C. Wylie             South  
                      M. Kelly             West  
                      S. McWilliams      West  
                      L. Watson            West

IN ATTENDANCE: R. Mahaffy        N.I.H.E.  
                      M. Graham           N.I.H.E.

APOLOGIES:        A. McAvoy            Belfast  
                      I. Hamilton           South East  
                      A. Johnston          North East

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MINUTES	ACTION
1.0    MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	
1.1    Agreed as a true and accurate record.	
2.0    MATTERS ARISING	
2.1    (2.1)   Severe Weather Issues It was noted that the relevant report had not been presented to the new Minister as yet. However, H. Walker agreed to produce a summary version once this is available.	N.I.H.E.
2.1.1   L. Sproule also circulated a sample of a leaflet/poster that is to be given to tenants displaying where the Stop Cock is located in their house and what it looks like. Central H.C.N. welcomed this.	N.I.H.E.



MINUTES	ACTION
<p>2.2 (2.2) Plumbing Course L. Sproule circulated a Paper outlining the type of issues to be covered as part of this Course. The content was agreed as suitable. L. Sproule to obtain a few more quotes for the delivery before proceeding.</p>	L. Sproule
<p>2.3 (2.3) Policy Papers It was noted that C.H.C.N. received 2 Presentations on policies at today's meeting plus a Paper on Key Performance Indicators (K.P.I.s) developed by the Project Procurement Team which was circulated for information.</p>	
<p>2.4 (2.4) Training Needs Analysis B. Holmes distributed paper entitled 'Community Training Model' in response to the presentation and document presented by C. Marks to C.H.C.N. at last month's meeting. It was explained that the 'Community Training Model' document outlined the various stages of development on the ladder of community involvement from Steering Group stage right through to what is needed to be a Central H.C.N. member and the type of training which S.C.N.I. provides at each step of the process.</p>	
<p>2.5 (2.6) Choice Based Lettings/Stock Transfers G. Flynn reported that there had been 2 lettings made through the pilot project and that N.I.H.E. will continue to keep C.H.C.N. informed on progress.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.6 (2.7) Rent Payment Advice Noted that still planned for Autumn as an event but no actual date at present.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.7 (2.8) Disability Forum C. Wylie reported that the inaugural meeting of the Disability Forum had taken place the previous day and felt that the meeting had been very useful and successful. There was a good representation from across N. Ireland as well as types of disabilities people had. A list of priorities is to be agreed for a Plan of Action. Next meeting to take place mid September. C. Wylie to keep Central H.C.N. updated.</p>	C. Wylie
<p>2.8 (2.9) L.A.P.S. It was noted that a Board Paper had not been presented to the Board in May and further consultation will need to take place before moving to the next stage.</p>	N.I.H.E.



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<p>2.9 (2.10) Local Service Scrutiny B. Holmes provided an update in respect of the 5 Pilots confirming that 4 of the 5 were now up and running while the 5<sup>th</sup> should be operational very soon. It is proposed to allow the Pilots to proceed over the summer months and hopefully carry out an Evaluation in September. S.C.N.I. and N.I.H.E. to meet to discuss further.</p>	N.I.H.E./S.C.N.I.
<p>2.10 (2.10.1) J. Kelly confirmed that the Response Maintenance L.E.A.N. Pilot was progressing well but did request a presentation on L.E.A.N. to be made to the pilot Group. N.I.H.E. to follow up.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.10.1 H. Walker reported that the survey of the Response Maintenance questionnaire was nearing completion and that analysis would follow.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.11 (2.13) Policies: Community Lettings H. Walker reported that the policy document is still being discussed internally and it is hoped to bring to C.H.C.N. in the Autumn.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.12 (2.12) Civil Contingencies Working Group Nothing further to report at present.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.13 (2.16) Housing News – Feedback L. Sproule distributed an Update Paper from Central Information Section on what the contents of this year’s Housing News will resemble. Noted by Central H.C.N.</p>	
<p>2.14 (2.18) Register of Residents H. Walker confirmed that the Housing Executive were currently consulting with the Register of Residents on response maintenance classifications.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.15 (3.8) Housing Selection Scheme B. Holmes reminded members that the consultation on these issues will run until 5.00 p.m. on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011 and responses can be received in writing, by post, fax or email. Full details are available in the proposal paper.</p>	H.C.N. Members
<p>2.16 (5.1.7) J. Kelly confirmed that the Belfast North D.H.C.N. meeting had been re-arranged.</p>	
<p>2.17 (6.1) N.I.E. Keypads In response to concerns raised by S. McWilliams, N. Rice had contacted N.I.E. who provided advise on the use of the</p>	



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<p>Keypads. It was pointed out that there are a number of safeguards for customers who need to use the £1 emergency credit:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the £1 emergency credit runs out in the evening, N.I.E. Energy will continue to supply electricity until 8.00 a.m. the next morning.</li> <li>• On all new keypads installed after April 2009 the 8.00 a.m. credit period is extended to 11.00 a.m. – this is called Friendly Credit.</li> <li>• Householders with keypads installed prior to April 2009 can arrange this credit extension to 11.00 a.m. by contacting N.I.E. Energy.</li> <li>• If the £1 emergency runs out after 4.00 p.m. on Friday they'll continue to supply electricity over the weekend.</li> </ul>	
<p>2.17.1 A Briefing Document from September 2009 outlining the rationale for the above is included as an Appendix.</p>	
<p>2.17.2 N. Rice had also advised that N.I.E. Energy were willing to come along to a meeting of the Central H.C.N. to do a briefing on the Keypad system and other support services. It was agreed to discuss following the H.C.N. Review.</p>	Central H.C.N.
<p>2.18 (6.2) G. Flynn reported that the Housing Executive would be represented at a Briefing Session on the new H.B. guidelines and that he would provide any feedback to Central H.C.N.</p>	G. Flynn
<p>3.0 MEMBER ISSUES</p>	
<p>3.1 J. Morgan raised an issue raised at Belfast Area H.C.N. regarding current N.I.H.E. policy in relation to the standard/grading of glass used in its schemes. H. Walker agreed to follow up and provide details to the next meeting.</p>	H. Walker
<p>4.0 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY REVIEW</p>	
<p>4.1 M. Graham provided an informative presentation on the Draft Homelessness Strategy Review 2011-16.</p>	
<p>4.2 M. Graham made reference to the last Strategy which was reviewed in 2002 and outlined some of the successes of the previous Strategy namely:</p>	



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- (a) Provision of Permanent accommodation
    - Almost 10,000 units of social rented sector accommodation have been provided since 2003/2004.
    - Rent deposit guarantee schemes have been introduced in Belfast and L'derry.
    - Over 48,000 homeless households have been permanently re-housed in the social rented sector since 2003/2004.
  - (b) An Inter-Agency Forum established to tackle sleeping rough and street drinking
  - (c) The development of a sex offenders' accommodation strategy
  - (d) The development of a protocol for responding to the needs of vulnerable young people aged 16-21
  - (e) The provision of a range of services to assist victims of domestic violence
  - (f) 24 hour domestic violence helpline
  - (g) Setting up of a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferencing (M.A.R.A.C.)
  - (h) Development of a Sanctuary Scheme
  - (i) The introduction of improved services for foreign nationals
  - (j) The development of localised advice services for homelessness presenters
  - (k) The provision of a housing and homelessness advice service in prisons
- 4.3 M. Graham also outlined the 4 Main Objectives as part of the proposed new Strategy i.e.:
- (a) to place homelessness prevention at the forefront of service delivery
  - (b) to reduce the length of time households experience homelessness by improving access to affordable housing
  - (c) remove the need to sleep rough
  - (d) to improve services to vulnerable homeless households
- 4.4 Central H.C.N. members commended the N.I. Housing Executive and asked how the Housing Executive intended meeting these 4 new objectives. M. Graham responded that each of the 5 N.I.H.E. Areas would be asked to produce an Action Plan which in turn could be monitored and scrutinised by Area H.C.N.s.

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<p>4.5 M. Graham clarified that the Consultation period will run until mid August, however, Central H.C.N. members were asked to provide any feedback via S.C.N.I. by the end of June 2011. A copy of the Draft Document to be forwarded to Central H.C.N.</p>	<p>Central H.C.N. Members</p>
<p>5.0 SUCCESSFUL AND SUSTAINABLE TENANCIES</p>	
<p>5.1 R. Mahaffy provided a very comprehensive presentation and update on the development of a Tenancy Sustainment Strategy.</p>	
<p>5.2 R. Mahaffy identified the following as reasons why Tenancies were breaking down:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor Property Condition</li> <li>• Poor Environmental Conditions</li> <li>• Difficulties setting up a home</li> <li>• Rent Arrears</li> <li>• Anti-Social Behaviour</li> <li>• Vulnerability</li> <li>• Lack of collaboration</li> </ul>	
<p>5.2.1 The following were then identified as what is needed to be done by N.I. Housing Executive to improve tenancies:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Health Checks</li> <li>• Tenancy Support</li> <li>• Environmental &amp; Property Management</li> <li>• Anti-Social Behaviour (Prevention)</li> <li>• Money &amp; Debt Advice</li> <li>• Promote Financial Inclusion</li> <li>• Promote Resilience</li> </ul>	
<p>5.2.2 R. Mahaffy also reported the importance of the role that the Housing Executive can play in promoting Employment and improving Essential Skills for tenants and communities alike and thus help to build stronger and more stable communities in the longer term.</p>	
<p>5.2.3 Central H.C.N. members welcomed the presentation and the work completed to date by R. Mahaffy in developing this new Strategy. There were positive comments and encouragement for the Housing Executive in playing such a leading role in sustaining tenancies and thus communities.</p>	



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5.2.4 Central H.C.N. members also reflected on the need to be conscious of working with established community groups in estates/areas and in turn developing partnership working arrangements. R. Mahaffy noted.	R. Mahaffy
5.2.5 R. Mahaffy informed members that it would be late Summer before a Draft document would be available for consultation purposes. Central H.C.N. members to be provided with draft when completed.	R. Mahaffy
6.0 REVIEW OF H.C.N.	
6.1 L. Sproule circulated a Paper in response to a query at the last meeting requesting a list of Customer Service areas which Central H.C.N. should be consulted in line with the Review of the H.C.N. i.e. where prior consultation on policies/strategies are being developed which will impact on tenants/residents.	
6.2 H. Walker and G. Flynn clarified the level and type of prior consultation which Central H.C.N. could play in respect of each of the Service Areas identified on the Paper presented.	
6.3 Additional Areas identified by Central H.C.N. members themselves included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget/Finances</li> <li>• Equality Issues</li> <li>• New Products/Designs</li> <li>• New Build Development</li> </ul>	
6.3.1 Some Central H.C.N. members also referred to the option of instead of having representatives of H.C.N. sit on the Housing Executive's full Board that the views of Central H.C.N. could be asked for and provided on Policies/Strategies/Papers in advance of going to the Housing Executive's Board. These views could then be either taken onboard or dismissed by the full Board, however, where Central H.C.N. views are not taken onboard feedback should be provided to them on reasons why. It was generally felt that the main issue to overcome in such a proposal was one of sequencing. These sentiments to be factored into the review process.	N.I.H.E.



MINUTES	ACTION
<p>6.3.2 L. Sproule clarified that the Review of the H.C.N. would be completed over the summer break and that a Draft Community Involvement Strategy (C.I.S.) should be prepared for presentation at the September meeting.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>7.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p>	
<p>7.1 Prince's Trust H. Walker informed the meeting that she had had contact from the Prince's Trust and a request to attend a future Central H.C.N. meeting to promote their work. It was agreed that any circulars/leaflets which the Prince's Trust wish to have promoted can be done so via the H.C.N. mail list.</p>	
<p>7.2 Housing Heroes Award L. Sproule reported that J. Wilson (East Belfast) had won an Inspirational Tenant Award.</p>	
<p>7.3 Invitation B. Holmes commented that he had recently spoken with N.I.H.E. Chair B. Rowntree who had extended an invitation for Central H.C.N. to meet with the Housing Executive's full Board. It is aimed to do so for the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2011 Central H.C.N. meeting but to be confirmed at the next meeting. This invitation was very much welcomed by Central H.C.N. members.</p>	
B. Holmes	
<p>7.4 Community Conference B. Holmes also reported that B. Rowntree had agreed to take part in a 'Question &amp; Answer' session along with the new Chief Executive, Dr. J. McPeake at the Community Conference. This was also welcomed by Central H.C.N.</p>	
<p>8.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING</p>	
<p>8.1 <b>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011 at 11.00 a.m. in N.I.H.E. H.Q., Belfast.</b></p>	



## APPENDICES

1. Sustaining Tenancies Presentation Notes
2. Draft Homelessness Strategy
3. N.I.E. Energy Brief for Stakeholders on Use of Keypad meters

