

MINUTES OF CENTRAL HOUSING COMMUNITY NETWORK MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2011 AT 11.00 A.M.

IN S.C.N.I. HEADQUARTERS

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

APOLOGIES:	I. Hamilton	South East
	A. Johnston	North East
	G. Flynn	N.I.H.E.
	M. Watt	S.C.N.I.

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MINUTES	ACTION
1.0 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING	
1.1 Agreed as an accurate record.	
2.0 MATTERS ARISING	
2.2 (2.5) Choice Based Lettings	
M. Rooney referred to the 5 Pilots (1 in each Area) ongoing at present which were attempting to fast track various options for allocating 'difficult to let' properties. The Pilots will be evaluated in the coming months and feedback provided to C.H.C.N. on any outcomes.	M. Rooney
2.2.1 Stock Transfer	
H. Walker updated members that N.I.H.E. were currently developing a Protocol with D.S.D. regarding future Stock	



MINUTES	ACTION
<p>Transfers, however, the initial numbers being considered have reduced from some 5,000 to approx. 300. This reduction has been due to N.I.H.E. hoping to address more M.E.I. work to its own stock. H. Walker to keep C.H.C.N. members updated as developments occur.</p>	H. Walker
<p>2.3 (2.3) Rent Payment Advice M. Rooney felt that this initiative may not take place until the new year and that an update be provided in early 2012.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.4 (2.4) Disability Forum C. Wylie reported that Forum members had carried out accessible assessments in a number of District Offices over the summer and the next meeting of the Forum is 10<sup>th</sup> November 2011. It was also reported that future meetings will cover both strategic/policy issues relating to disability as well as other more practical related matters.</p>	C. Wylie
<p>2.5 (2.6) Local Service Scrutiny It was noted that the pilots are still progressing well and all 5 pilots will be evaluated by the end of the year and a report brought to C.H.C.N.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.6 (2.7) L.E.A.N. Pilot J. Kelly reiterated that a presentation would be most useful on the L.E.A.N. process. H. Walker agreed to liaise with the L.E.A.N. Team and provide feedback to C.H.C.N. on the end evaluation of the pilot.</p>	H. Walker
<p>2.7 (2.8) Policies: Community Lettings H. Walker reported that the preliminary exercise had been completed and costings provided. It was felt, from a preliminary inspection, that the cost of this initial work could be borne from the Response Maintenance budget. L. Sproule reported that discussions with Building Control were ongoing in respect of this matter. Update to be provided to Central H.C.N.</p>	L. Sproule
<p>2.7.1 In regard to Planning Fees, L. Sproule commented that these could cost approx £600 per let although a 50% reduction could be made for those groups with Charitable Status. B. Holmes asked if groups without Charitable Status could use S.C.N.I.'s charitable number or indeed could the charitable objects of all group constitutions not be used, similar to what happens with R.C.A. and rates exemption for community premises. L. Sproule agreed to follow up.</p>	L. Sproule



MINUTES	ACTION
<p>2.8 (2.10) Register of Residents L. Sproule reported that liaison with Research is ongoing and it is hoped that relevant questions can be developed to utilise the Register of Residents.</p>	N.I.H.E.
<p>2.9 (2.11) Housing Selection Scheme (H.S.S.) M. Rooney informed the meeting that following the consultation carried out by the Housing Executive, there was broad consensus on the proposals put forward. This feedback was provided to the Minister and the Social Development Committee, however, the D.S.D. have subsequently requested the Housing Executive re-examine the H.S.S. in a more 'comprehensive and radical fashion'. It is hoped N.I.H.E. will complete this second exercise by the end of January 2012. M. Rooney agreed to keep Central H.C.N. updated on progress and consulted on any new proposals.</p>	M. Rooney
<p>2.10 (2.13) Glass Standards/Glazing H. Walker reported that N.I.H.E.'s Board would be discussing a new specification for double glazing at its October Board meeting and would report back to Central H.C.N. at the next meeting.</p>	H. Walker
<p>2.11 (2.14) Successful and Sustainable Tenancies H. Walker informed the meeting that 5 pilot D.O.s will be identified to roll out new policies and procedures as part of the 'sign up' process. This will commence in the New Year and some feedback should be available by April 2012.</p>	R. Mahaffy
<p>2.12 (2.15) Community Involvement Strategy (C.I.S.) L. Sproule reported that Housing Executive Board approve the Transitional C.I.S.</p>	
<p>2.13 (3.7) Adverse Weather Action Plan (Compact) L. Sproule confirmed that all necessary information, as agreed at the last meeting, had been sent to D.O.s. B. Holmes reported that approx 12 Compact Addendums had been completed so far with very positive feedback provided.</p>	D.O.s
<p>2.13.1 M. Kelly referred to good practice in Omagh/Cookstown where the D.O. had organised the D.M.M. provided training to H.C.N. community reps using a vacant dwelling. It was felt that this example could be used by other Districts.</p>	D.O.s



2.13.2 L. Watson and S. McWilliams also shared some good practice being developed in the North West Neighbourhood Renewal Areas where community volunteers were going to be engaged in helping to clear footways in their areas. M. Kelly also reported that Omagh N.R.P. would be repeating the production of a credit card size information leaflet with relevant numbers which proved so useful last year.

2.14 (4.3) N.I.H.E. Modernisation  
S. McWilliams enquired, on behalf of Limavady H.C.N., if the Housing Executive were aware of the savings made to Housing Executive's expenditure as a direct result of the last phase of modernisation within the Housing Executive and what savings could be planned from any new structure. H. Walker agreed to ascertain if some figure(s) could be attributed to this query.

H. Walker

### 3.0 AREA H.C.N. FEEDBACK

3.1 There was similar feedback from all Area H.C.N.s in respect of the presentations by respective Area Managers on the various options on re-structuring within the Housing Executive. There was good engagement and discussion with all Area H.C.N. reps.

3.2 Some additional issues from the Area H.C.N. meetings included:

- Belfast – query about Dairyfarm and Shankill local presence remaining in any future re-structuring.
- S. East – a concern about the local service being diluted due to a reduction in local opening times or counter provision.

Also, query about possible locations of HUBS (if this is the option agreed) – could alternative locations be considered apart from R.P.A. agreed centres e.g. Downpatrick in the S. East?

- West – concern raised in respect of Neighbourhood Officers being used for counter duties resulting in dilution of neighbourhood service on ground.

Consideration should be given to utilising community facilities for delivery of local presence akin to Sub Office type facilities.

N.I.H.E.



## 4.0 MEMBER ISSUES

4.1 L. Watson informed fellow members of good news that Caw Community House had received the necessary funding from Neighbourhood Renewal Partnership to install a lift in the building.

4.2 P. McQuillan reported that Coleraine H.C.N. were hosting a Best Kept Garden Awards Night which had created good engagement across the District. She also congratulated N.I.H.E. in carrying out a full C.O.T. in Moneydig, the first of its kind in some time.

4.3 J. Kelly updated members of a visit by a (in)famous pop star to the New Lodge area. M. Kelly could not understand why Rhianna had not visited Omagh or its surrounding fields.

## 5.0 N.I.H.E. RE-STRUCTURING

## 5.1 Update

H. Walker updated members on the current position in respect of discussions within the Housing Executive. She alluded to the fact that no formal business case on any of the options had been prepared for presentation to the Board and it is anticipated that this will not take place until November or perhaps December. N.I.H.E. will not, therefore, be in a position to move ahead until this Board approval has been obtained. However, H. Walker did comment that each delay in obtaining a final decision will impact on the implementation of any Option agreed. It was therefore looking more likely that it would be September/October 2012, instead of the previously mentioned June 2012 date, when full implementation would take place.

5.2 In follow up to the information presented at the previous C.H.C.N. meeting, including how the H.C.N. could be re-structured in line with any change which occurs within the Housing Executive, B. Holmes presented a supplementary 'Community Involvement' document, based on liaison with C. Marks and L. Sproule and their respective areas of work, outlining how the community can become better engaged and participate more fully with the Housing Executive, regardless of which option the Board of N.I.H.E. may choose in the coming months.



MINUTES	ACTION
<p>5.3 The 'Community Involvement' document outlines proposals and a way forward for the following areas of the H.C.N.:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Housing Forum/Fora</li> <li>▪ Inter-Agency Working</li> <li>▪ H.C.N. Personnel Specification</li> <li>▪ H.C.N. – HUBs</li> <li>▪ Central H.C.N. – Shadow Board and purpose of etc.</li> <li>▪ Training Provision for those involved at each tier or level of new restructured H.C.N.</li> </ul>	
<p>5.3.1 Central H.C.N. members were asked to consider the contents of this document and feedback any comments directly to S.C.N.I. by Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October.</p>	<p>Central H.C.N. Members</p>
<p>5.4 It was also agreed that L. Sproule would present and liaise with Area Managers and District Managers in the coming weeks so as to take on board any of their comments or feedback. Any feedback could then be fused with Central H.C.N. comments on an agreed Way Forward.</p>	<p>L. Sproule</p>
<p>5.5 Once this Way Forward has been agreed, a full training programme can commence so that the community reps can participate effectively within the new structure.</p>	<p>N.I.H.E. S.C.N.I.</p>
<p>6.0 JOINT BOARD MEETING – 9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2011</p>	
<p>6.1 B. Holmes and L. Sproule requested members to give some thought to ensuring that the opportunity of this joint meeting is used to its full potential.</p>	
<p>6.2 Discussion took place on the types of issues/topics which could be raised at the joint meeting. The following (using the list of Customer Service Areas as produced by L. Sproule) were among those issues/topics around which there was consensus among members:-</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Planned/Response Maintenance – refresh participation on Management Team, similar to past experience and tied in with the need for proper training.</li> <li>➤ Housing Selection Scheme and Homelessness – impact on rural communities.</li> <li>➤ Community Involvement – M. Kelly.</li> <li>➤ Housing Benefit and Universal Credit – A. Hanlon.</li> <li>➤ Heating Policy – case for gas/oil and fuel poverty – L. Watson.</li> </ul>	<p>H. Phillips P. McQuillan</p>

MINUTES	ACTION
➤ Community Safety – constraints of current legislation – G. Blevins.	
7.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
7.1 Asbestos Letter Template L. Sproule circulated this revised template letter. Any comments were requested by Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> October 2011.	Central H.C.N. Members
7.2 N.I.H.E. Annual Conference It was agreed that G. Blevins and A. Hanlon attend this Conference on 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2011 on behalf of Central H.C.N.	G. Blevins A. Hanlon
7.3 H.C.N. Dates for 2012 B. Holmes circulated the dates of all Central and Area H.C.N. meetings for 2012.	
<b>8.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>	
<b>8.1 The next meeting will be the joint Board meeting to held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 11.00 a.m. in N.I.H.E. Headquarters, Belfast.</b>	



## **APPENDICES**

- Community Involvement – Future Structure of H.C.N.
- Central and Area H.C.N. Dates for 2012

