



## MINUTES

**MEETING:** Tyne & Wear Strategic Housing Partnership Board

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> October 2006

**TIME:** 2 pm

**VENUE:** North Tyneside Council

**CHAIR:** Cllr Henry Trueman

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### **In attendance:**

Cllr Henry Trueman	City of Sunderland Council
Martin Bewick	City of Sunderland Council
Alan Caddick	City of Sunderland Council
Jackie Park	Gateshead MBC
Cllr David Napier	Gateshead MBC
Christine Cunningham	Newcastle City Council
Cllr Mike Cookson	Newcastle City Council
Debbie Shearer	North Tyneside Council
Cllr Bruce Pickard	North Tyneside Council
Cllr Jim Allan	North Tyneside Council
Melanie Holland	South Tyneside MBC
Ian Cansfield	South Tyneside MBC
Aidan Oswell	TWSHP
Sarah Mtango	Northern Housing Consortium

### **1.0 Apologies**

Paul Walker	South Tyneside MBC
Cllr Michael Clare	South Tyneside MBC

### **2.0 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed. No issues were raised.

### **3.0 Decisions and Action Points from the previous meeting**

AO confirmed that the letter to the minister had been sent but no reply had been received.

There have been no further meetings of the NEHF. The group is still in its formative stages but once regular meetings begin to occur minutes will be circulated.

AO has made an informal approach to the Assembly regarding attendance at a future meeting and the response was very positive. AO will organise this and in addition invite Mike Short from the IDeA to discuss transformational government and capitalising on gains from e-government.

JP will circulate details of the BNG loans scheme via e-mail for comments at the next meeting.

AO confirmed that most authorities had responded to the request for input on strategic priorities for the SRHS.

#### **4.0 Sub Regional Housing Strategy Update**

The SRHS will provide for proper representation to the RHB to secure as much investment for Tyne and Wear as possible through the commissioning process of SHIP 3. We need to produce the best possible strategy, and we need to act together to positively influence the development of the NERHS. Members, Heads of Service and other stakeholders came together at the St James Park event, out of which came a long list of strategic priorities. The first stage of the SRHS development will be to create a short list with close liaison with the heads of service and members. This process will be as open and inclusive as possible. We will also include RSL's and developers, through the channels that individual partner authorities have already set up so that we can provide a strong base for partnership and collaborative working.

Decision: The Board acknowledged the progress made to date and agreed to move forward with the proposed approach without delay. It was agreed to fund the work from the commonly owned resources currently held on behalf of the Partnership by the Northern Housing Consortium.

#### **5.0 Partnership Governance**

We have come to a crucial stage in which key decisions will be made in the future around HMA, the development of the SRHS and the Partnership itself. In the run-up to February the level of input required of members of the Partnership into the SRHS and other processes has the potential to be onerous. As a result, the current quarterly meeting structure will not be sufficient. The proposals in the paper are not about downgrading the role of elected members but about creating a process which is flexible enough to be deliverable. AO confirmed that it was likely that monthly meetings would be necessary to deliver the SRHS and that where work is developing rapidly we do not want to be held back by an inability to get agreement on decisions. AO proposed that operational responsibility be devolved to the officer sub group, retaining 'as required' meetings of the full board for strategic decision making.

DN requested that the quarterly meetings be maintained with the flexibility to increase the number of meetings but not decrease. He was keen to delegate to the officer sub group and suggested that recommendations be brought back to the

Board meetings, calendared in advance. BP concurred that, whilst he believes in trust, the quarterly meeting structure was necessary in order to monitor operations and suggested that meetings be calendared for one year. He also suggested that where a single decision is required, papers be circulated and we make use of teleconferencing for discussion. AC felt that timely briefings between Heads of Service and members was important to ensure everyone was kept up to date. MC agreed with the quarterly structure but felt that extra meetings would be difficult to attend and would therefore rely on CC to brief him. IC and CC suggested we gear the meeting dates around the work programme.

Decision: The Board agreed to retain quarterly meetings of the Partnership Board (regardless of the level of strategic decision making required) and increase the number of meetings as appropriate. It was agreed that the operational management of the work be delegated to the Officer Sub group. AO agreed to circulate a number of advance meeting dates, with start times of either 12 noon or 4 pm.

## **6.0 LA Housing Presentations**

AC and MB presented Sunderland City Council's housing strategy. There are clear links between the priorities in the strategy and the objectives of the regional housing strategy. The SRHS will also follow this framework. This led to a discussion about future areas of partnership working e.g. a common policy on EDMO's and licensing as Gateshead and Newcastle are two of the leaders in this area. The creation of a vitality index for Tyne and Wear and common standards for energy efficiency to deal with rising energy costs were also cited as potential areas for joint working. South Tyneside Council are working with Groundwork on innovative energy efficiency projects and have developed a supplementary planning document on sustainable development. IC agreed to circulate.

IC presented South Tyneside Councils housing strategy. In South Tyneside the strength is it's joined up housing and planning function, and there is much to be gained from disseminating this approach across Tyne and Wear. South Tyneside is enforcing an affordable housing policy across the borough. The SRHS must crystallise how we intend to deliver shared expertise or services across the sub region e.g. developing a common principle on planning for affordable housing. The planners in Tyne and Wear already meet monthly on critical issues and share evidence and expertise. It was suggested that we use good practice case studies in the SRHS to demonstrate deliverable outcomes.

## **7.0 Housing Market Assessment Update**

There has been a very positive response to the HMA. To move forward we must now bring together the intelligence within the NHC, TWRI, BNG and individual Partner authorities.

Decision: It was agreed that this would be achieved by making use of the existing SLA's between TWRI and Partner authorities and/or using some of the commonly held resources resident with the NHC to commission TWRI to deliver an HMA position paper for Tyne and Wear.

## **8.0 Regional Housing Strategy Update – Tyne and Wear Sub Regional Event**

The evidence emerging from the Tyne and Wear HMA has already been influential in convincing the NEHB that there is an issue of affordability in the urban area, therefore it is crucial that the partnership makes use of all opportunities to influence the revised regional housing strategy. There will be a number of opportunities to do this, the first being the Tyne and Wear consultation event at Sunderland Council Chamber on 14<sup>th</sup> November. The event is for all stakeholders including the private sector and voluntary sector. A suggestion was made to invite the Tyne and Wear MP's, we already have a strong working relationship and we need their support in lobbying government. AO will arrange for them to be invited.

Action Point: Add the Tyne and Wear MPs to the invitation list for the event on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

## **9.0 AOB**

None discussed

## **10.0 Next Meeting**

TBC