



MEETING NOTES

MEETING: Tyne & Wear Strategic Housing Partnership

DATE: 21st February, 2007

TIME: 3pm for officers, 4pm for elected members

VENUE: Committee Room A, South Shields Town Hall

1. Apologies

Apologies: Jackie Park, Sarah Mtango, Cllr Bruce Pickard, Cllr Jim Allen, Cllr Michael Clare and Cllr Mike Cookson.

In Attendance: Alan Caddick, Christine Cunningham, Paul Walker (Ian Cansfield), Debbie Shearer, Aidan Oswell. Tony Stephenson, Cllr Harry Trueman, Cllr David Napier

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

DS raised the issue of the developing NHC business plan as mentioned in the previous minutes. She suggested that the time was now probably right to review the SLA between the Partnership and the NHC given the significant change and development that the TWSHP has undergone over the last 18 months. **CC** agreed and suggested that discussions on this issue should be formally opened up at the SRHS editorial group workshop planned for the 5th March.

3. Decisions and action points of the previous meeting

AO updated the meeting on progress against the previous action points and decisions

4. Sub Regional Housing Strategy Update (Aidan Oswell)

AO presented the information paper provided to attendees ahead of the meeting which clearly spelled out both the progress made to date on the SRHS and the process for delivering the final strategy by the NEHB deadline of July 2007. He also made special reference to the forthcoming editorial group workshop, suggesting that by the end of this workshop, the key principles which will underpin the SRHS will need to be firmly in place. He indicated that whilst

the outputs of both the editorial groups and the long (16 month) consultation period on the contents of the SRHS were highly valuable, only buy-in on the part of all members of the TWSHP would ensure that the SRHS delivered the degree of change desired in the sub region. **HS** thanked **AO** for the presentation and agreed that buy-in by the partner authorities would be crucial. **DN** provided a brief but useful insight into the planned development of prefabricated properties supplied by IKEA in Gateshead. **AC** mentioned the crucially important issues of risk management and delivery of the SRHS over the next 12-18 months, suggesting that an ongoing formal risk assessment should be set up around delivery. **DS** agreed, indicating that this linked directly to the issue of identifying the added value that can be gained from sub regional partnership working. **TS** suggested that the SRHS could almost be considered a form of Multi Area Agreement (MAA) and colleagues suggested that an investigation into Tyne and Wear's preparedness for such an approach should be carried out alongside the SRHS development process. **TS** was positive about the development achieved in the sub region to date, indicating that the NEHB would continue to update the Partnership through the Director's attendance at the regular meetings of sub regional coordinators and through the other established channels.

5. Housing Market Assessment Update (Aidan Oswell)

AO provided an update on the progress of the sub regional HMA project. He talked to the paper provided ahead of the meeting, identifying some of the key issues that have emerged to date. **CC** expressed surprise that affordability was not represented on the paper, but **AO** indicated that he had included a variety of lesser acknowledged issues, stating that the growing affordability problem in Tyne and Wear is already widely understood. He did stress, however, that affordability will be clearly represented in the final paper. **DN** acknowledged the importance of the empty flats/apartments issue highlighted in the paper and **AO** suggested that there was now clear evidence of a relative over-supply of these units on Tyneside.

TS was very positive about the HMA findings to date, suggesting that they will be highly valuable in making the case for the type of interventions outlined in the previous paper. He particularly stressed the need to further examine the housing offer in Tyne and Wear, and re-emphasised the importance of the interactions with adjoining sub regions and authority areas. He also stressed the need to develop clear links between the SRHS and developing sustainable communities plans, and that revenue support for capital investment aimed at vulnerable groups would be key to this. **AC** reinforced this point, suggesting that "elderly" is now an acknowledged political issue. He also enquired of **TS** when the regional Gypsy and Traveler housing needs research would be published and **TS** advised this would be over the next couple of weeks. **DS** asked how the TWSHP might work more closely with the NEHB and **TS** suggested that the structures currently in place (sub regional coordinator meetings etc) are delivering well.

HT thanked **TS** for his attendance and input into the meeting.

Action Point: **AO** to circulate the draft HMA compilation as soon as practicable.

Action Point: AO to provide feedback to HOS from sub regional coordinator meetings.

6. Local authority housing strategy presentation – North Tyneside Council (Debbie Shearer)

DS provided a useful presentation on the current housing strategy position in North Tyneside which sparked an interesting discussion. **TS** suggested that asset ownership was a key issue in building sustainable communities and **CC** highlighted the difficulties associated with this when average annual household incomes in areas like the east end of Newcastle are as low as £20,000. She also stressed the need to understand how social renting fits on the “housing ladder” and recommended that the sub region work closely on providing for difficult clients with complex needs. **AC** stressed the need to understand how social renting can compliment other housing markets and **TS** suggested that there was still a “missing product” for last time buyers. He also suggested that this work never finishes and is only ever a snapshot at a given point in time.

7. AOB

None

8. Date and time of next meeting

23rd March, Bewick Dobson Room, Newcastle Civic Centre,
Heads of Service Meeting 11.00 am
Board Meeting 12.00 noon subject to member availability.