

Sandwell Partnership

Notes of a Meeting of the Executive Board of the Sandwell Strategic Housing Forum

2nd July, 2009 at 9.30 a.m.
at the offices of Accord Housing Association
178 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich

Present: Councillor Simon Hackett (Chair) (Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council [MBC]);
Dr Chris Handy (Vice-Chair) (Accord Housing Association – Chief Executive);
Ally Allerson (Greets Green Partnership – Director);
Tonia Flannagan (Voluntary Community Sector Representative);
Paul Jones (Riverside Homes – Assistant Director);
Neeraj Malhotra (Sandwell Primary Care Trust - Public Health Specialist);
John Selway (Sandwell Private Landlord Forum – Member);
Keith Stanley (Black Country Chamber of Commerce – Sandwell Director).

Kirsten Casey (Sandwell MBC – Corporate Services - Partnerships and Housing Division - Housing Partnerships Manager) for Peter John;
Adrian Scarrott (Sandwell Homes – Operations Director) for Brian Oakley;
Paul Smith (Sandwell MBC – Urban Regeneration - Economic Regeneration & Skills Division – Community Development Unit) for Kim Mocroft.

Apologies: Lynda Bateman (Sandwell MBC – Urban Regeneration - Interim Executive Director);
Dr Derrick Campbell (Race Equality Sandwell – Chief Executive);
Alan Dean (Sandwell MBC - Adult & Community Services – Head of Health & Well Being);
Dominic Harman (Persimmon Homes (West Midlands) - Managing Director);

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Peter Holtham (Black Country Connexions – Connexions Commissioning Manager for Sandwell);
Peter John (Sandwell MBC - Corporate Services - Director of Partnerships and Housing);
Jan MacMillan (Sandwell Community Involvement & Participation Services [SCIPS] - Company Secretary);
Kim Mocroft (Sandwell MBC – Urban Regeneration - Economic Regeneration & Skills Division – Community Development Unit);
Brian Oakley (Sandwell Homes – Chief Executive);
Andrea Pope-Smith (Sandwell MBC - Executive Director Adult & Community Services);
Philippa Smith (Sandwell MBC – Urban Regeneration – Planning and Transportation Division - Principal Planner).

Sara Woodall (Accord Housing Association – Chair of Community Regeneration Thematic Group);
Laura Coburn (Sandwell MBC - Corporate Services - Partnerships and Housing Division - Assistant Partnerships Officer).

In attendance: Steve Smith (Sandwell MBC – Corporate Services - Partnering & Improvement Division - Service Manager, Partnering & Improvement);
Kate Jenkins (Sandwell MBC – Corporate Services - Partnering & Improvement Division - Thematic Liaison Manager).

Officer Support: Maureen Christian (Sandwell MBC - Corporate Services - Partnerships and Housing Division - Partnerships Officer);
Nick Laws (Sandwell MBC, - Corporate Services - Partnerships and Housing Division –Commissioning & Performance Manager).

28/09

Notes of Last Meeting

The notes of the meeting of the Executive Board held on 7th May, 2009 were received and approved.

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29/09

Presentation from Accord Housing on What it Can Bring to the Delivery of the Strategy

The Executive Board heard a presentation from Dr C Handy, Chief Executive, of Accord Housing on what the Association brought to the delivery of the Sandwell Housing Strategy. He reported that the Association:-

- * had a representative on the Homelessness Steering Group;
- * Chaired the Community Involvement Group;
- * was Vice-Chair of the EB SSHF;
- * Housing Officers participated in Borough tasking;

In addition, Accord and the Black Country Housing Association would be working to support the Wednesbury Executive Team to deliver the regeneration project for Wednesbury.

The Chair thanked Dr Handy for hosting the meeting at the Offices of Accord Housing and the Executive Board congratulated Dr Handy on being nominated for the award of the OBE.

30/09

Getting National Performance Indicators 154 and 155 Back on Track

The Board was advised by Nick Laws, Commissioning & Performance Manager, Partnerships and Housing Division, Sandwell MBC, that, due to the new Homes and Communities Agency approach to funding, the current return on the level of completed affordable homes did not include all the homes built using all forms of public and private funding.

The Executive Board felt that all housing built with an element of public funding should be included in the total number of completed homes.

Because of uncertainties about the robustness of the figures reported for these returns, K Casey, the Housing Partnerships Manager, Partnerships & Housing Directorate, Sandwell MBC was asked to look at this matter and report back to the next meeting of the Executive Board.

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Response to the Fall in Money Supply in the Housing Sector

Arising from the discussion on NIs 154 & 155 concerns were expressed about:-

- * whether Sandwell had too many priorities and what were the priority investments within those priorities?;
- * whether there was an element of “Sandwell fatigue” in the funding bodies when the Borough submitted bids for resources?;
- * what had the local authority done to pull partners, developers, banks and other financial institutions together to try to ensure the supply of credit and financial advice?;
- * what had the Council and other public sector bodies done to identify what financial services they could deliver themselves.

The Chair and Vice Chair were asked to pull together a “Tight Task and Finish” round table meeting comprising of relevant members of the Housing Development and Regeneration Thematic Sub-Group, together with A Allerson Greets Green Partnership Director; K Casey Housing Partnerships Manager; P Jones Riverside Homes Assistant Director; K Stanley Black Country Chamber of Commerce Sandwell Director and others as appropriate, to urgently draw up an “action plan” to address the concerns referred to above so that any actions identified can be incorporated into the Housing Development and Regeneration Action Plan.

32/09

IDeA Peer Assessment And What it Means for the SSHF

A summary of the recommendations and areas for improvement that had implications for the partner members of the Sandwell Strategic Housing Forum was submitted and considered. The Executive Board approved the suggestion to allocate any actions arising from them to the Executive Board and the four Thematic Sub-Groups as appropriate for implementation.

The Executive Board asked N Laws, Commissioning & Performance Manager, Partnerships and Housing Division, Sandwell MBC to ensure that the allocations be reported back to the next meeting of the Executive Board and that arrangements be made to monitor implementation of the recommendations and actions as part of the regular Executive Board performance management process.

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33/09 **Feedback from the Local Strategic Partnership Board (LSPB)**

The Executive Board received and noted feedback from G Bowman Partnership Director - Sandwell Partnership from the meetings of the LSPB on 29th January, 19th March, 30th April and 25th June, 2009. The main concerns of the LSP focused on:-

- * the impact of the recession;
- * meeting NIs 154 & 155;
- * education, training and employment progression of young people;
- * health inequalities, the gap between Sandwell and the rest of the country;
- * the apparent perception of local people about Sandwell as a place to live;

34/09 **Performance:- Delivery Plan – Feedback Against Actions**

The Executive Board asked N Laws, Commissioning and Performance Manager, Partnerships and Housing Division, Sandwell MBC to ensure that when performance feedback is reported in future, a cover sheet should be added showing some “headline achievements”, what had dropped out, and indeed what had been significantly delayed and the reasons for any delays.

35/09 **Sandwell Strategic Housing Forum - Annual Conference**

The Executive Board agreed the date of the 2009 Annual Conference as 27th November, 2009. Initial Programme Items suggested included the launch of the Affordable Housing Strategy, exhibition stands and, possibly, themed Workshops.

36/09 **Growth Point – Written Update**

P Smith, Principal Planner, Planning and Transportation Division, Sandwell MBC submitted a written update on the projects to be supported from the 2009/10 and 2010/11 Growth Point resources.

The Housing Development and Regeneration Thematic Sub-Group was asked to consider the implications of planning obligations on development proposals and report back to the next meeting of the Executive Board.

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37/09 **“Risk Management” Implications From Today’s Meeting**

Potential risk identified today:-

- * the delivery of the Housing Pledge as part of the Greet Green Strategy;
- * supporting independence around mobility.

38/09 **Proposals for a Workshop to Focus on Delivering the Sandwell Strategic Housing Forum Thematic Business Plan as Partners**

D Reeves, Inspira Consulting, West Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership submitted draft proposals for Workshop for the Executive Board to help the Board to Focus on Delivering the Thematic Business Plan.

It was proposed to hold the Workshop on the same date as the next meeting of the Board on 10th September. The Workshop would aim to:-

- * increase the levels of joint collaboration and action to deliver the Thematic Plan;
- * stimulate creative thinking, develop new solutions and positive behaviours to operate more effectively to deliver shared targets and would think through the implications of this, to clarify roles and contributions to the partnerships work, what would be done and what needed to influence others to do.

The session would help to join up the vision, look at the cross-cutting issues and the roles of sub /theme groups to add value across the partnership and it would enable board members to explore a geographical focus for example looking at developments in Smethwick and how we could maximise impact.

The Executive Board approved the draft proposals and asked whether a business meeting would be held before or after the Workshop?

The Chair asked that D Reeves be invited to the Agenda Planning Meeting on 13th August, 2009 to clarify proposals for the Executive Board.

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Dates of Future Meetings

It was agreed that meetings would be held at 9.30 a.m. on Thursdays:-

10th September, 2009

at Sandwell Homes, Roway Lane,
Oldbury;

12th November, 2009

Venue to be arranged;

14th January, 2010

at Urban Living, 4th Floor, Hawthorns
House, Halfords Lane, West
Bromwich;

4th March, 2010

Venue to be arranged.

(Meeting ended at 11.30 a.m.)

<p><i>Contact Officer: Richard. M. Ebanks</i> <i>Democratic Services Unit</i> <i>0121 569 3190</i></p>
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