



## Leasehold Panel

### Minutes of the meeting, 17 March 2008.

**1. Attendance.** Mr M Pentol, Mrs A Goodhew, Mr M Ruggins, Mr N Martin-Clark, Mr L Edgar, Mr B Hines, Mr N K Owuahene-Acheampong, Mr R Dalliday, Mrs F Joslyn, Mrs S Adewumi, Mr M Shaw, Mrs L Richards, Mr D Wright, Mr A Yohannes, Mrs D Grandson, Mrs H Wright, Ms G Ndiwa, Ms S Williams, Ms S Brown (Chair, Haringey Leaseholders' Association).

Officers. Mr N Thevanesan, Home Ownership Manager, Mr D Mulford, Construction Procurement Manager, Haringey Council, Ms D Manning, Client Support Manager, Haringey Council, Ms C Joseph, Equalities Manager, Homes for Haringey and Mr B Nicholas, Leasehold Project Officer, who took the minutes.

Chair: Mr Nick Martin-Clark.

Apologies. Ms B McConnell.

### **2. Minutes of the last meeting (28 January 2008).**

The minutes were agreed as being a true record.

### **3. Matters arising.**

Mr Martin-Clark requested to know the progress regarding Homes for Haringey's consideration of proposals for a revised policy regarding leaseholders' windows. [Following consultation with the Panel and with the HLA, proposals have been drafted for a change in policy to enable leaseholders to install their own windows. They would then not have to contribute to the installation of windows in other flats in the building.]

Mr Thevanesan responded that the report was scheduled to be submitted to a meeting of the Executive Management Team by the beginning of April. It was expected that it would then be agreed by the Council at the beginning of May. Mr Martin-Clark expressed concern at what he felt had been an undue delay in progressing this matter. He said that on the basis of the

current information it appeared leaseholders would not have the option to install their own windows until April 2009.

- ❖ **Action point.** Mr Thevanesan agreed to see what arrangements could be made to address this issue.

Mr Thevanesan informed the Panel that he shortly intended to send a letter to all leaseholders in the first year of the programme to advise them of the type of work to be carried out to their building. He also proposed to hold a workshop to provide leaseholders with some more information about the programme.

**4. Proposed long term agreement in respect of employment of consultants for construction works. (Re-tendering following end of 5 year term) - David Mulford, Construction Procurement Manager, Haringey Council and Doreen Manning, Client Support Manager, Haringey Council.** At the start of his presentation Mr Mulford explained that the new agreement would cover work in all of the Council's directorates including Homes for Haringey, but it would not include anything under the Decent Homes Programme. It was necessary because the existing 5 year agreement had come to an end.

The question was raised as to how costs would be recovered from leaseholders through their service charges. Mr Thevanesan explained that this would be through the percentage fee charged in respect of major works bills.

- ❖ **Action point.** Mr Thevanesan agreed to provide more information about the fees at the next Panel meeting.

Mr Mulford continued by saying that the new framework would need to commence in April (after the end of the old one). The professional disciplines to be covered under the framework would be as follows:

- Architects
- Building Surveyors
- Quantity Surveyors
- Mechanical and Electrical Engineers
- Structural Engineers
- Project Managers
- CDM Co-ordinators (Construction Design & Management – mainly health and safety issues).

In order to ascertain the relevant criteria and potential candidates, it had been necessary to consult quite widely, both internally and externally:

- Clients have been consulted who carry out construction works, the main directorates in the Council being:
  - Children and Young People,

- Corporate Resources,
  - Adult Culture and Community Services,
  - Urban Environment,
  - Homes for Haringey, etc.
- Regular discussions with the Construction Knowledge Officer Network across business units
  - Other Local Authorities
  - Constructing Excellence – this is an organisation which provides Key Performance Indicators for the UK Construction Industry, benchmarks, etc
  - Office of Government Commerce (an office of HM Treasury) – which leads on procurement matters
  - Members of the Council's Cabinet Procurement Committee (February 08).

The programmes of work relating to Decent Homes and Building Schools for the Future each had their own separate frameworks, Mr Mulford said. He then referred to the process which had been followed to date in ascertaining appropriate contractors. This included the following steps:

- Advert placed in the Official Journal of the European Union, June 2007, to notify potential contractors (as required under European law).
- 78 requests were then received by the Council for pre qualification questionnaires PQQs).
- Use of PQQs - the purpose of these questionnaires is to provide the information to create a short list by evaluating potential contractors in terms of technical knowledge and experience, capability/capacity, organisational and financial standing, etc
- 11PQQs were returned
- 9 contractors were invited to tender
- 3 returned tenders that met all the necessary requirements.
- The evaluation was then carried out in terms of: price 40% /quality 60% (including interview)
- Quality assessments involving Client Officers.

Other factors involved in the evaluation were: professional indemnity, use of quality systems, effective equalities policies, and the implementation of health and safety procedures. Although price was very important Mr Mulford said, the most important thing was to have contractors who could provide high quality services at competitive prices. Furthermore the nature of a framework agreement was that there would be no obligation to provide work to a particular consultant. A process of 'mini-competition' could be entered into amongst the appointed consultants where it was appropriate. There would also be testing against the standard information on public procurement matters available from the Office of Government Commerce.

The pricing of the tender returns had indicated that savings had been achieved on current fee rates. The agreement would relate to priced schedules of rates for different types of work. The framework agreement would not run longer than 4 years, as this is the maximum term allowed under EU directives.

Consultation with leaseholders had commenced through the issue of two Section 20 Notices in October of last year. One notice had been concerned with the proposed agreement to appoint a consultant to carry out the work in relation to major construction projects from start to finish, covering matters such as project management, structural engineering, building surveying services and so on. The other notice had described the proposal for a smaller contract for consultancy functions covering clerk of works, CDM coordinators and quantity surveyors.

Mr Mulford said that a report would be presented to the Procurement Committee shortly. The Committee would agree the proposals. The framework would then be implemented in two phases one for all Directorates of the Council other than HfH and then one for HfH pending the finalisation of the section 20 consultation process.

Dispensation would be sought from the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal in view of the fact that it would not be possible to provide leaseholders with any estimates of the costs which might be included in their service charges (if work were to be carried out to their building). Mr Thevanesan spoke at this point to say that legal advice had been received that it would be necessary to obtain dispensation in relation to this agreement, as had been the case with the agreement regarding the Decent Homes Programme.

Mr Mulford then gave a short description of the advantages of the proposed framework agreement

- Single Lead Consultant
- Consistency of standards
- Clear accountability
- Process and cost efficiency
- Training and technical knowledge transfer
- Whole Life Costing
- Best Practice
- Percentage fees for the life of the framework
- Call off arrangement

He explained that under the proposed arrangements the number of consultants working across the borough would be reduced from 32 at present to around half a dozen. This would make monitoring and control of their activities much easier in future. With regard to whole life costing this was concerned with the use of more environmentally sustainable materials and methods, recycling and

so on. Thus as an example, aluminium framed windows would probably be chosen in preference to ones made from UPVC plastic material, in view of the problems with recycling plastic at the end of the life cycle. The framework would leave it open to the Council to engage in further price comparisons or 'mini-competitions' where it was felt to be appropriate. At the end, Panel Members indicated their appreciation through a round of applause.

**5. Review of Homes for Haringey's Equal Opportunities Policy – Christine Joseph, Equalities Manager, Homes for Haringey.** Ms Joseph presented a briefing paper in relation to the review she was undertaking with regard to Homes for Haringey's policies. She commenced by saying it is generally recognised that Homes for Haringey excels in this area of policy, which is basically the same as that of Haringey Council. It is now felt that it is an appropriate time to consider any amendments which may be required. This will be necessary in order to reflect current best practice, the provisions of new legislation, etc. Furthermore some changes may be necessary in view of the fact that the policy now relates only to the provision of housing services.

Mr Martin-Clark raised the question of access to meetings. He said that since some were held during normal office hours, this made it difficult for people to attend, who were normally at work. Ms Joseph replied that Homes for Haringey was concerned to achieve the highest participation that was practically possible. She noted that the equalities policy at present did not include a section on consultation and that this was probably an area which needed to be addressed. She said that the period of consultation would not end until May so if Panel Members would like to make any further observations, she would be glad to receive them.

Her contact details are as follows: phone 020 8489 1721, email: [Christine.Joseph@HomesforHaringey.org](mailto:Christine.Joseph@HomesforHaringey.org)

**6. Customer Access Strategy 2008 – 2012 – draft report provided by Sue Hunter, Services Development Manager.** Mr Nicholas drew the Panel's attention to the copy of this report which had been circulated previously with the minutes. Ms Hunter had said she was very grateful to the Panel for their comments, which had been very constructive and helpful. She would have liked to have attended in person to present the draft but unfortunately was unable to do so. She would welcome any further comments the Panel might wish to give. Mr Martin-Clark expressed the Panel's thanks to Ms Hunter. Since Panel Members had no observations to make during the meeting he suggested that if they wished to do so they could contact Mr Nicholas who would forward them to Ms Hunter.

**7. Any other business.** The question was raised about the changeover from analogue to digital transmission of television programmes and how this would affect the provision of communal aerials.

- ❖ **Action point.** Mr Thevanesan said he could invite an engineer to speak to the Panel on this subject and this was agreed.

Mr Martin-Clark concluded the meeting by thanking Mr Mulford and Ms Manning for their very informative presentation and Ms Joseph for her very useful briefing.

- \*\* -