

## NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES

Minutes of the Meeting of **THE BOARD OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES** held on Thursday 30 April 2009 at 5.15pm in the Lady Chapel Room, Kelham Hall.

**Present:** Mrs G Hughes (Chair)  
Cllr Mrs B Brooks  
Mrs K Chaffe  
Mrs J Clark  
Mrs L Clayton  
Mr A Fell  
Miss S Miles  
Miss S Murphy  
Cllr D Nixon  
Cllr Mrs C Rose  
Mrs P Taylor  
Cllr S Wallace

### **Officers in**

**Attendance:** Mrs R Rance (Chief Executive)  
Mr S Feast (Business Services Director)  
Mr F McElhinney (Customer Services Director)  
Miss S Williamson (Finance Manager)

### 19. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr R Ainger and Cllr Mrs NA Armstrong.

### 20. **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2009**

*(Cllr Betty Brooks joined the meeting at this point)*

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 8 January 2009 were discussed and the following amendment was identified on page 4, minute 17 in paragraph 1. The word Committee's should read Commission's.

#### **AGREED (unanimously) that:**

**the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2009 with the above amendment were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Chair.**

#### **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM –** **Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 8 January 2009**

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

### 21. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT ITEMS**

#### **a) Mary Butler, Former Director of the Board**

*(Cllr Christine Rose joined the meeting at this point)*

The Chair paid tribute to Miss Mary Butler, former Director and Chairman of the Board who resigned in January this year. During Mary's time as Chairman the Company became established as a 2 star ALMO as has focussed on the delivery of the Decent Homes programme which has made such a difference to our tenants.

Miss Butler led the Board through some challenging times using her skills and experience to ensure the Board worked positively as a whole to deliver successes for the tenants and residents of Newark and Sherwood. Mary put her ability to devote so much time and energy to Newark and Sherwood Homes down to her vitamins and earl grey tea but we all know it was down to her hard work and commitment to the community.

Mary Butler left Newark and Sherwood Homes in very good shape, she was the lifeblood of the Company.

The Chair wished Miss Butler good health and best wishes for the future.

22. **MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES**

a) **Human Resources Committee held on 22 January 2009 and 6 April 2009**

The Chair introduced the minutes for Boards information and consideration.

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEM –**  
**Human Resources Committee held on 22 January 2009 and 6 April 2009**

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes for each meeting.

b) **Audit Committee held on 29 January 2009**

The Chair introduced the minutes for the Boards information and consideration.

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEM –**  
**Audit Committee held on 29 January 2009**

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

**the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 22 January 2009 and 6 April 2009 and the Audit Committee held on 29 January 2009 be considered as information.**

23. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**

The Business Services Director explained that a vacancy for the position of Vice Chair had arisen due to the resignation of Miss Mary Butler and requested nominations for the vacancy of Vice-Chair of the Board. Nominations were received for Arthur Fell and Susan Murphy. A ballot was held to determine the successful candidate.

*(Mrs Lynn Clayton joined the meeting at this point)*

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **Arthur Fell be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Board.**

24. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - URGENT DECISION NOTIFICATION:  
APPOINTMENT OF MARIE WILD (HQN) AS LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT EXTERNAL FACILITATOR AND ADVISOR FOR 2008/09  
AND 2009/10**

The Chair introduced the report and explained that in order for the Company to operate effectively, it requires mechanisms for urgent decision making. This is outlined in the Company's Scheme of Delegation at paragraph 10.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the urgent decision be considered as information.**

25. **NATIONAL FEDERATION OF ALMOS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING –  
DIRECTORS OF THE BOARD FEEDBACK**

The Chair introduced the report for Directors of the Board to feedback to the Board the learning they acquired during the National Federation of ALMOs Annual General Meeting.

Four Directors of the Board attended the conference: Arthur Fell, Jean Clark, Kathleen Chaffe and Pam Taylor.

Each Board member in turn gave an overview of the workshops that they attended, which focussed on: good practice in governance, relations between ALMOs and Councils, addressing unemployment on estates, HRA subsidy review, Board members networking, achieving equalities and change management. The Directors of the Board highlighted the key issues for the Board to consider, through the improvement planning process, which had been discussed at the AGM

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the implications of the Directors of the Board feedback from the National Federation of ALMOs Annual General Meeting be considered through the Improvement Planning Process.**

26. **DIRECTOR OF THE BOARD AWARD SCHEME FOR STAFF**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the creation of the Director of the Board Excellence Awards which will provide an opportunity for the delivery of excellence by a member of staff to be formally acknowledged and rewarded by Directors of the Board. Also to consider the mechanism to formulate a judging panel, drawn from the Board, to consider and award the Director of the Board Excellence Awards.

The Board discussed the introduction of the Director of the Board Excellence Awards and viewed the opportunity to further recognise the efforts of the staff team

as a positive step. The importance of transparency and rigour through a clear process was also highlighted by the Board.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the Director of the Board Excellence Awards be created and awarded annually at the Annual General Meeting in November.**
- b) **the Human Resources Committee be given delegated authority to decide the recipient of the Director of the Boards Excellence Awards and appoint the judging panel.**

27. **RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING PILOT SCHEME**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the inclusion of Newark and Sherwood Homes in a pilot scheme for recruitment advertising as part of its membership of the Midlands ALMO Human Resources Group. The report outlined that to enable inclusion in the pilot the Board would need to exercise its power to waive the requirements of the Code of Procedures.

The report highlighted the reasons behind joining with other members of the Midland ALMO Human Resources Group in the pilot. These include the achievement of value for money savings, shared learning between the Midlands ALMO's, effective targeting of audiences and the recruitment of high quality individuals who would contribute positively to the achievement of the Company's Vision.

The Board clarified that the pilot was for a period of six months and at the conclusion of the pilot the procurement of recruitment advertising services would be undertaken within the Code of Procedures with respect to Contracts.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **section 4.3 of the Code of Procedures in Respect to Contracts is invoked in relation to the Recruitment Advertising Pilot Scheme for a period of six months.**

28. **INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMME 2009/10**

The Chair introduced the report to consider and approve the 2009/10 Internal Audit Programme.

The report detailed that the Audit Committee at its January 2009 meeting had approved the process to formulate the 2009/10 programme. In forming the 2009/10 programme, a review of the auditable areas had been undertaken and revised risk areas had been identified to reflect the current environment. The Board clarified that where the number of days spent on an Audit was less than the proposed days then the charge was made for only the days spent.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the 2009/10 Internal Audit Programme be approved.**

29. **STRATEGIC RISK REVIEW**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the outcomes of the Senior Management Team six monthly review of the Company's Strategic Risks. The Chair reminded the Board that a full review of the Company's Strategic Risks is undertaken annually by Directors of the Board

The report provided the outcomes of the review with newly identified risks and those risks with a change being identified at table 3.5. A correction to paragraph 3.8 was provided to the Board to undertake a full risk review in June 2009 and not July as stated in the report.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the Strategic Risk Register be amended as detailed in Appendix C.**
- b) **the Audit Committee be given delegated authority to monitor strategic risks in the upper quartile of the risk matrix.**

30. **PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

The Chair introduced the report to allow the Board to consider the mechanisms by which the performance of Newark and Sherwood Homes is monitored by the Board and the options for intervention available to Directors of the Board.

The report of the Business Services Director explained that the Board currently monitors performance on corporate key performance indicators, corporate key tasks, and management accounts through monthly exception reports. The report further detailed the mechanisms for intervention; specifically discussion with the relevant member of the Senior Management Team, the Chairman of the Board or the Chairman of the appropriate Committee, available to Directors of the Board to challenge those areas of performance which are not achieving target.

The report included an example of a performance report which may be used to highlight areas where performance is of concern to Directors of the Board and the management interventions. This report may be issued through the Directors of the Board information system or provided to the appropriate Committee or the Board.

Directors of the Board acknowledged that the overall performance of Newark and Sherwood Homes is excellent and that the mechanisms in place to allow the monitoring and challenge of performance had been instrumental in delivering this performance. Directors of the Board welcomed the provision of additional performance trend information in May and November and the introduction of the performance report where identified as necessary following challenge by a Director of the Board.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the Board continues to monitor and challenge performance in line with the guidance contained within the Governance Guide.**

31. **AUDIT COMMISSION PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

The Chair introduced the report to monitor and take action to ensure the delivery of the recommendations made by the Audit Commission following the re-inspection of Newark and Sherwood Homes in September 2008.

The report outlined the Audit Commission recommendations and identified completion dates together with an actions update.

Directors of the Board commented on the challenge to achieve the delivery of a large number of recommendations, which are still ongoing, by the end of May 2009 and asked for reassurance on delivery. The Senior Management Team reassured the Board that comprehensive plans were in place with clear leads and responsibilities, as part of the Company's Service Improvement Plan, to achieve the delivery of the Audit Commissions recommendations.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) progress on delivery of the Audit Commission Re-Inspection recommendations was considered and no further actions, other than those determined, are required.**

32. **TENANCY TERMINATION AND DEBT RECOVERY**

The Chair introduced the report to recognise and agree the requirement to consistently apply the terms of the Tenancy Agreement in relation to tenancy termination and to discuss the framework for waiving of the debt in sensitive circumstances on tenancy termination.

*(Mrs Jean Clark left the meeting at this point)*

Two corrections were provided to the Board on page 4, 3.6 of the report, should read 'that the framework outlined in 3.5 above is applied.' and 3.4, first line should read '13 November 2008' and not '8 January 2009'.

**To enable the Directors of the Board to complete the agenda, in accordance with Meeting Procedure Principle 2, the Chair extended the meeting for one hour at this point.**

The report was discussed in detail with Directors of the Board seeking reassurance that the framework would take into account individuals sensitive circumstances whilst satisfactorily discharging the Company's legal obligations with respect to the tenancy agreement.

The Board also noted that the proposed framework would take into account the diverse needs of tenants at the point of termination of tenancy.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) the Board notes the requirements for tenants to provide 4 week's notice at tenancy termination including where the tenant has died or gone into care.**

- b) **the Board approves the application of the former tenant arrears recovery process, which may result in the waiving of debt in some individual sensitive circumstances on tenancy termination, to all debts including those where the tenant has died or gone into care.**

33. **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

The Chair introduced the report to consider and approve the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

The report highlighted that challenging anti-social behaviour has been a priority for the Company since its formulation but until now actions had been conducted under the terms of the Council's anti-Social Behaviour Policy. This new policy has been developed as the Company's own to support the delivery of the Company's Vision and details a suite of objectives that Newark and Sherwood Homes will operate to. The effectiveness of the policy will be measured through key performance indicators specified within the Company's Performance Management Framework.

Two corrections were provided to the Board, on page 8, 4.1, second bullet point should read Diary Sheets and last paragraph of 4.1, first sentence, should end at 'confidential'.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the Anti-Social Behaviour Policy be approved.**

**In compliance with Principle 6 of the Company's Meeting Procedure, the public observing the meeting were asked to leave at this point as confidential information would be discussed within the next item.**

34. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – REVIEW OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES**

The Directors of the Board considered the exempt report of the Chief Executive.

The meeting closed at 20.10

Chair