

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES

Minutes of the Meeting of **THE BOARD OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES** held on Thursday 18 September 2008 at 5.00pm in the Lady Chapel, Kelham Hall.

Present: Miss M Butler (Chair)
Mr R Ainger
Mrs K Chaffe
Mrs J Clark
Mrs L Clayton
Mr A Fell
Mrs G Hughes
Miss S Murphy
Mrs P Taylor
Cllr S Wallace

Officers in

Attendance: Mrs R Rance (Chief Executive)
Mr F McElhinney (Customer Services Director)
Miss S Williamson (Finance Manager)
Miss C McDonald (HR & Communications Manager)

59. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs NA Armstrong, Cllr Mrs B Brooks, Mr G Parkinson and Cllr Mrs C Rose.

60. **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 26 JUNE 2008**

The Chair advised that further to minute 49: External Appraisal of the Board, the appointed firm would be KPMG and Directors of the Board would receive confirmation of this through the information system.

The Chair also advised that the Annual Accounts have been signed.

AGREED (unanimously):

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2008 were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Chair.

61. **CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT ITEMS**

a) Audit Commission Inspection

The Chair on behalf of the Board, thanked the staff for all their enormous efforts and also to the Chief Executive for her commitment and determination.

(Cllr Stuart Wallace joined the meeting at this point)

The Chief Executive thanked the Board on behalf of staff, for their leadership and support to make decisions. The outcome of the inspection is not yet known but the process has been very robust for tenants and the services provided by Newark and Sherwood Homes vigorously tested. The Audit Commission have advised of the

Company's strengths and weaknesses and some of the good points so far have been Resident Involvement, Investment, Value for Money and Adaptations.

The outcome of the inspection should be publicly announced in the third week of December, although it could be sooner.

During discussion the Board expressed the importance of expressing thanks with staff through celebration.

62. **MINUTES FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

a) Human Resources Committee held on 30 June 2008

The Chair of the Human Resources Committee, Mrs Ginette Hughes, introduced the minutes, highlighted key areas and asked for questions.

b) Finance & Probity Committee Meetings held on 24 June 2008 and 16 July 2008

A member of the Finance & Probity Committee, Mrs Lynn Clayton, introduced the minutes from the 24 June 2008 and the Chair of the Finance & Probity Committee, Mrs Ginette Hughes, introduced the minutes from the 16 July 2008. The key areas were highlighted.

c) Service & Performance Committee Meeting held on 22 July 2008

A member of the Service & Performance Committee, Miss Mary Butler, introduced the minutes, highlighted key areas and asked for questions.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee Meeting held on 30 June 2008, Finance & Probity Committee Meetings held on 24 June 2008 and 16 July 2008 and Service & Performance Committee Meeting held on 22 July 2008 be noted.

63. **NOTIFICATION OF URGENT DECISIONS**

a) Amendment to Business Plan

The Chair introduced the urgent decision and explained that through the Improvement Planning Processes of the Company, a Corporate Key Task had been identified by the Senior Management Team. To enable it to be included in the Self Assessment forwarded to the Audit Commission, this was incorporated in the Business Plan as an urgent decision. This was notified to all Directors of the Board at the time of the decision through the Information system.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

a) the urgent decision, be noted.

b) Appointment of Specialist Contractor to Upgrade the Hard Wired Call System

The Chair introduced the urgent decision and explained that the current Housing Capital Investment Programme includes the project to replace the hard wired call systems within supported housing schemes with dispersed Lifeline Units. As Tunstall are the current deliverers of both the call system and the key related system Piper Network Communications 3 (PNC3) which is not being upgraded at this time; an urgent decision was made by the Customer Services Director to appoint Tunstall as a specialist contractor. This enables this time critical project to start at the earliest opportunity. The Chair was consulted on this by the Chief Executive.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the urgent decision be noted.

64. **HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the recommendation from the Finance & Probity Committee from the meeting held on 16 July 2008.

The Committee had considered the policy in detail and recommended the approval of the policy

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Health & Safety Policy be approved.

65. **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND CODE OF PROCEDURES IN RESPECT TO CONTRACTS**

The Chair introduced the report to consider and approve the revised Financial Regulations and Code of Procedures with respect to Contracts.

The Financial Regulations and Code of Procedures in respect to contracts have been reviewed to reflect the business environment and changes in management responsibilities. Both documents apply to all members of staff, managers and Directors of the Board.

The language has been updated and plain English has been used to make the documents more user friendly.

The Code of Procedures in respect to contracts has been updated and rewritten to accommodate equality and diversity guidance into the procedures.

The Board asked for details of how checks were undertaken with respect to the use of credit cards and procurement cards. It was confirmed a controlled process was in place for use and all were independently reconciled monthly.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the revised Financial Regulations and Code of Procedures with respect to contracts be approved.
- b) delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive and Finance Manager to revise non fundamental elements of the Financial Regulations and Code of Procedures in respect of Contracts.

66. **BOARD CO-OPTION PROTOCOL**

The Chair introduced the report to consider and approve the Board Co-option Protocol.

The Board Co-option Protocol has been developed to satisfy Corporate Key Task 1 for 2008/2009 with the outcome being the; “Composition of contributors to the Board is reflective of service users”.

The protocol sets out the mechanisms by which the Board can be adaptable and flexible within the parameters of its constitution to include and consider different views and opinions reflective of the community which the company serves.

The Board Co-option Protocol therefore supports the delivery of the Company’s vision and values through the achievement of its objectives.

The Board discussed the report and the need for specialisation to further support their equality and diversity aims.

AGREED that:

- a) the Board Co-option Protocol be approved, removing the word ‘usually’ from point 9.2.

67. **RISK REGISTER**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the recommendation of the Finance & Probity Committee from the meeting held on 16 July 2008.

The Board discussed how the managing risk training delivered by KPMG had been helpful and that the Finance & Probity Committee had considered each strategic risk identified by the Board to determine whether the risk should be Treated, Tolerated, Agreed or Transferred. This has been a comprehensive and thorough process the Finance & Probity Committee, recommended the Strategic Risk Register 2008/9, be approved by the Board.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Strategic Risk Register for 2008/9 be approved.

68. **ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN POST 2010**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the Asset Management Strategy and Asset Management Plan beyond 2010.

As part of the Company's Corporate Key Task 3 there is a requirement to develop post 2010 investment requirements and incorporate into the Asset Management Plan.

The report updated Directors of the Board on the delivery of this task. One correction was noted to page 6 of the strategy, the third paragraph should read 'outlined in section 27 of this strategy' (and not 25).

The Board found the Asset Management Strategy to be very clear and understood that the Asset Management Plan comprised the Building Cost Model, stock condition data and known additional priorities forecast forward for 30 years, forming into an actual Housing Investment Programme for the next five years.

In considering the Asset Management Plan it was clarified that this was a costed estimate of identified need and that the Asset Management Plan was not funded. The Council had a significant funding gap to deliver the required investment need. Further it was noted that this estimated cost did not include market inflation rates, which if the work was commissioned could inflate the cost further. It was additionally discussed that a new Stock Condition Survey would be required to further strengthen the plan going forward and that the type of survey to be completed would be influenced by the Council's decisions concerning the identified investment funding gap.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Asset Management Strategy be approved.
- b) the Asset Management Plan post 2010 be endorsed.

69. **APPOINTMENT OF COMPANY SECRETARY**

The Chair introduced the report to consider a change in the role appointed as Company Secretary.

The Company had previously expressed a view to move the role of Company Secretary from the Chief Executive to the Business Services Director.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Business Services Director be the Company Secretary.

The meeting closed at 18.30.

Chairman

