

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES

Minutes of the Meeting of **THE BOARD OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES** held on Thursday 26 June 2008 at 5.00pm in the Lady Chapel, Kelham Hall.

Present:

- Miss M Butler (Chair)
- Mrs G Hughes (Vice-Chair)
- Mr R Ainger
- Cllr Mrs NA Armstrong
- Mrs K Chaffe
- Mrs J Clark
- Mr A Fell (*for part of the meeting*)
- Miss S Murphy
- Cllr D Nixon
- Mr GT Parkinson
- Cllr Mrs C Rose
- Cllr S Wallace (*for part of the meeting*)

Officers in Attendance:

- Mrs R Rance (Chief Executive)
- Mr F McElhinney (Customer Services Director)
- Mr S Feast (Business Services Director)
- Miss C McDonald (HR and Communications Manager)
- Miss C Meek (Customer Access and Support Manager)
- Miss S Williamson (Finance Manager)

Also in Attendance:

- Ms S Porter (KPMG)
- Mr R Price (Audit Commission)

43. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mrs B Brooks, Mrs L Clayton, Mrs P Taylor

44. MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 1 MAY 2008

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 1 May 2008 were discussed and the following amendment was identified:

The word 'unanimously' to be removed from minute 35. Internal Audit Programme 2007/8 & 2008/9

AGREED (unanimously):

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2008 with the above amendment were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Chair.

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

a) Chair's Announcement – Councillor Mr Dean Nixon

The Chair welcomed Cllr Nixon to the Board.

b) Urgent Item - Chartermark Accreditation

The Chair invited The Business Services Director to update the Board on Chartermark Accreditation. Newark and Sherwood Homes first gained Chartermark accreditation in 2005. Following a recent accreditation visit the company has built on this and has been confirmed as fully compliant with Chartermark.

46. **MINUTES FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

a) Finance & Probity Committee Meeting held on 21 May 2008

The Chair of the Finance & Probity Committee, Mrs Ginette Hughes, introduced the minutes, highlighted key areas and asked for questions.

The Chair advised the paragraph at the end of item 16, which related to Principle 6 of the Company's Meeting Procedure, was in error and was to be deleted before approval at the next Finance and Probity Committee.

b) Service & Performance Committee Meeting held on 27 May 2008

The Chair of the Service & Performance Committee, Mr Geoffrey Parkinson, introduced the minutes, highlighted key areas and asked for questions.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

the Minutes of the Finance & Probity Committee Meeting held on 21 May 2008 and Service & Performance Committee Meeting held on 27 May 2008 be noted.

47. **Customer Impact Assessment Policy – Notification of Written Resolution**

AGREED (unanimously) that:

the Customer Impact Assessment Policy was approved.

48. **Literacy Policy– Notification of Written Resolution**

AGREED (unanimously) that:

the Literacy Policy was approved.

(Cllr S Wallace joined the meeting)

49. **EXTERNAL APPRAISAL OF THE BOARD**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the proposal for an external review of the Board. The Business Services Director highlighted key aspects of report in particular the requirement set out in the terms of reference of the Company's Governance Guide for the Board to regularly review its effectiveness and self challenge, and the suggested remit of the external review.

The Board discussed if there was a market for this type of work and felt it would be useful if the firms invited to quote included those other than housing specialists, for example legal firms. It was considered useful to inform the Board of the appointed firm.

The Board also considered the timing of the external review and how by undertaking the review at this time it would form part of their annual review and overall development of the Board

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) an external appraisal of the Board be undertaken to cover the following areas
 - The size and membership.
 - The required skills, knowledge and experience.
 - Remuneration and re-imburement.
 - Representation.
 - Time served as a Director.
 - The future.
- b) The sum of £5000 from the Company balances to fund the external review be approved.
- c) a report on the outcomes of the external review be presented at the November 2008 Board meeting.

50. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2008**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the date for Newark and Sherwood Homes' fourth Annual General Meeting and the associated retirements.

The report outlined the requirements of the Company as set out in the Constitution, in relation to the Annual General Meeting and the retirement of both Tenant Board and Independent Board members. Mr Arthur Fell was required to retire based on the rotation for tenants. Mrs Lynn Clayton and Mr Geoffrey Parkinson were the Directors of the Board required to retire based on the rotation for independents.

Mr Geoffrey Parkinson addressed the Board notifying that he would not be standing for election at the Annual General Meeting. A selection panel was to be formed to select an independent Director of the Board.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the fourth Annual General Meeting of Newark and Sherwood Homes be held on 13th November 2008 at 2.30pm
- b) Mr Arthur Fell be the Director of the Board to retire based on the rotation for tenants
- c) Mrs Lynn Clayton and Mr Geoffrey Parkinson be the Directors of the Board to retire based on the rotation for Independents
- d) the Electoral Reform Service be retained to undertake the Tenant Director of the Board election process in line with the Code of Procedures with Respect to Contract (7.3.4 Specialist Contractors)
- e) a selection panel be formed comprising the Chair, Vice-Chair and the Chief Executive with Cllr S Wallace standing in for the Chair or Vice-Chair if required, and the other members of the Senior Management Team standing in for the Chief Executive if required. A report was to be forwarded to the September board meeting.
- f) in light of the incorporation of duties of Directors of the Board in law, the Senior Management Team be required to seek assurance as far as practicably possible of the ability of the potential Director of the Board to discharge their duties.

51. **GOVERNANCE GUIDE**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the revised Governance Guide. The Business Services Director highlighted key aspects in particular that the Governance Guide was a framework of good governance which supports Directors of the Board in understanding and applying common principles of good governance, the Guide had been developed and revised in line with “The Good Governance Standard for Public Services” (Langlands, 2005). Elements of the Company’s Act 2006 which have now come into force had been reflected in the revised Guide, and the development of the Director of the Board’s role and responsibilities within the Company were also reflected in the Guide.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the revised Governance Guide be approved.

(Miss S Williamson and Ms S Porter joined the meeting)

52. **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE POLICY**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the proposed Domestic Violence Policy. The policy sets out the approach the Company takes to respond to reported incidents of domestic abuse, working in joint partnership with Newark and Sherwood District Council and other key agencies.

The policy had been produced taking account of good practice and consultation with Newark and Sherwood Domestic Violence Forum.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Domestic Violence Policy be approved.

53. **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2007/2008**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the recommendations of the Finance and Probity Committee from their meeting on 24 June 2008.

The Chair of the Finance and Probity Committee, Mrs Ginette Hughes, advised the Annual Accounts had been thoroughly discussed and considered at the Finance and Probity Committee with a representative of KPMG presenting their highlights from the Final Audit Memorandum.

The KPMG representative was present to address the Board and answer any questions. A key change to the balance sheet (page 12) and pension liability had occurred since the Finance and Probity Committee meeting on 24 June 2008. Pension liability had reduced by approximately £162,000. This adjustment applied to all public sector bodies in Nottinghamshire.

The Board extended thanks to the Finance Manager and her team for producing accounts which were easy to understand and gave them confidence in moving forward in the future.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Annual Accounts 2007/2008 be approved including the adjustment of pension liability.

54. **LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the changes to the inspection regime through the introduction of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) and Local Area Agreements (LAA).

At the recent strategic planning day Directors of the Board had discussed changes in the inspection regime including the introduction of the CAA and LAA's.

The Board considered how the changes impacted on Newark and Sherwood Homes and the how the services developed and delivered by the company would contribute the successful achievement of the targets set through the CAA.

The Board also considered how, through the Improvement Planning Process and the development of the Business Plan the LAA could be supported through the achievement of National Indicators.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) through Newark and Sherwood Homes' Improvement Planning Process the implications of the introduction of the Local Area Agreement be considered and amendments made to the Business Plan to support the achievement of the National Indicators.

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(s)

55. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – MINUTES AND EXEMPT MINUTES TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 APRIL 2008**

The Directors of the Board considered the minutes and exempt minutes of the Human Resources Committee.

56. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – EXEMPT MINUTES TO THE FINANCE AND PROBITY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2008**

The Directors of the Board considered the exempt minutes of the Finance and Probity Committee.

57. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - CORPORATE THREE STAR ACTION PLAN DELIVERY**

The Directors of the Board considered the exempt report of the Business Services Director.

(Mr Arthur Fell left the meeting at this point)

58. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – REVIEW OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES FUTURE IMPLICATIONS**

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

The meeting closed at 18.45pm.

Chairman