

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES

Minutes of the Meeting of **THE BOARD OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES** held on Thursday 10 January 2008 at 5.00pm in the Drawing Room, Kelham Hall.

Present:
Miss M Butler (Chair)
Mr R Ainger
Cllr Mrs NA Armstrong
Cllr Mrs B Brooks
Mrs K Chaffe
Mrs J Clark
Mrs G Hughes
Miss S Murphy
Mr GT Parkinson
Cllr Mrs C Rose
Cllr S Wallace

Officers in

Attendance:
Mrs R Rance (Chief Executive)
Mr F McElhinney (Customer Services Director)
Miss S Williamson (Finance Manager)
Mr B Brassington (Investment Manager)

11. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr A Fell, Cllr L Sprigg and Mrs P Taylor.

12. **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2007**

The Chair updated the Board to confirm Mr Stephen Feast would be taking up the Business Services Director's post on 4 February 2008.

AGREED (unanimously):

that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2007 were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Chair.

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

a) Chair's Announcement – Communities & Local Government – Allocations of Funding for Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs), Rounds Three to Five

The Chair announced notification that the Council had been allocated:

£11,310,000	2008/2009
£11,310,000	2009/2010

These are the final two years allocations of the Decent Homes programme and secures the full allocation of the initial £49.5 million bid by the Council when setting up Newark and Sherwood Homes. This is excellent news.

The letter from the Communities and Local Government (CLG), states:

"I have been impressed with the achievements of ALMOs to date and look forward to them building on their achievements with these further funding allocations and wider housing and regeneration initiatives in your area".

The Chief Executive advised, in recent discussion with CLG officials – they have expressed their satisfaction with Newark and Sherwood Homes and its performance. That they have low contact with us because we are performing and delivering well.

b) Chair's Announcement – Development Workshop / "Governance, the Long-term direction"

The Chair advised the meeting that she had attended a development workshop run by the National Federation of ALMOs on "Governance, the Long-term direction". A handout would be circulated separately for discussion informally.

The Chair did inform the meeting that it was clear that the changes made concerning how the Board operates are good for long term governance of the Company. The workshop emphasised the importance of individual roles acting together in the Company's best interest.

14. **MINUTES FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

a) Finance & Probity Committee Meeting held on 5 December 2007

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

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

b) Service & Performance Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2007

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

c) Human Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 November 2007

Miss M Butler of the Human Resources Committee, introduced the minutes, highlighted key points and asked for questions.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

the Minutes of the Finance & Probity Committee Meeting held on 5 December 2007, Service & Performance Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2007 and Human Resources Committee Meeting held on 12 November 2007 be noted.

15. **BUSINESS PLAN, BUDGET, INVESTMENT PROGRAMME AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/2009**

The Chair introduced the report to consider and approve the Business Plan, Budget, Capital Programme and Property Investment Programme for 2008/2009.

The report detailed the Company's Business Plan, its Budget and Capital Programme for 2008/2009. Together these elements set out the priorities for the Company and the related funding to support these. The Business Plan sets out Corporate and Strategic achievements in 2007/2008 and sets initiatives, tasks and targets, which will be prioritised in 2008/2009. The Budget and Capital Programme are aligned to support the Company's delivery of its vision and objectives through its priorities for 2008/2009.

The report also outlines the formulation of the property investment programme for 2008/2009. This has been informed by stock condition data, tenants views, legislation and regulatory requirements and the delivery of the Company's vision and objectives. In considering the programme the Board is seeking to approve the Company's advice for investment requirements to the Council.

The Board discussed the Business Plan, Budget, Capital Programme and Property Investment Programme giving particular focus on the Property Investment Programme.

The Board were advised that items 1-16 in the programme were all essential to be undertaken and of any financial impacts to the Company of advising the Council of this and how the Council's funding decisions could impact on the Company financially and consequently on service delivery.

(Cllr Mrs Betty Brooks left the meeting at this point)

The Investment Manager and Finance Manager advised that through liaison with Council colleagues it is anticipated through strong partnership between Newark and Sherwood Homes and Newark & Sherwood District Council should the Board wish to advise the full 1-16 schemes it was considered this should be achieved with low financial impact to the Company.

The Customer Services Director advised the board to note this Property Investment Programme was the minimum requirement and had been prioritised to deliver this.

Directors of the Board in discussion considered it was important to deliver the full Property Investment needs and identified that there was no contingency in the programme which would mean that unknowns identified throughout the year would need to be considered and the entire programme considered in terms of priority at such a time.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Business Plan, Budget and Newark and Sherwood Homes Capital Programme for 2008/2009, be approved.

- b) the Property Investment Programme to include all 16 schemes 2008/2009, be approved.
- c) delegated authority be given to the Finance Manager in liaison with the Chief Executive to provide for a revenue contribution to capital up to a value of £350k in 2007/8.

16. **URGENT DECISION: MOBILE WORKING PROCUREMENT**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the urgent decision taken by the Customer Services Director to appoint a specialist supplier.

The report asked the Board to note the urgent decision taken by the Customer Services Director to contract with Blackbay, to provide the corporate Mobile Working solution identified, as a specialist supplier under the rules of procedures for contracts.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the urgent decision taken to use Blackbay as a specialist service provider, in accordance with Paragraph 7.3.4 of Newark and Sherwood Homes' Code of Procedures with Respect to Contracts, to supply and implement a tailored mobile working solution based on its Housing Connect application, building on the Optitime appointment system already in operation for delivery of responsive repairs, be noted.

17. **CRITICAL FRIEND**

The Chair introduced the report to seek Board approval for the acceptance of a single tender from specialist supplier Housing Quality Network (HQN) as a critical friend.

The report outlined that the Company has utilised HQN as a critical friend and incorporated outcomes from this within the Improvement Planning Process (IPP). To build on this, it proposed to extend the role of HQN as a critical friend to provide professional support to continue to develop services to fit local circumstances and reach excellence in service provision for tenants.

The cost has been incorporated within the 2007/2008 revised budget and the base budget for 2008/2009.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) Housing Quality Network be approved as a specialist supplier for a critical friend service in accordance with Paragraph 7.3.4 of Newark and Sherwood Homes' Code of Procedures with Respect to Contracts.

18. **FINANCIAL RULES - VIREMENTS**

The Chair introduced the report to seek Board approval to update the financial regulations with regard to financial rules for virements.

The report outlined the changes within the financial regulations in relation to the rules for virements. The changes progressed provided a financial framework, which enables resources to be allocated efficiently and effectively to changing business and customer needs and priorities. Providing financial stewardship in the most effective manner, ensuring that controls are robust to protect the company's assets, whilst providing business systems, which enable timely and informed decision-making.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the financial regulations for virements (section 6.3.1) be updated as per Appendix A.

The meeting closed at 18.14

Chairman