

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES

Minutes of the Meeting of **THE BOARD OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES** held on Thursday 12 November 2009 at 5.15pm in the Lady Chapel, Kelham Hall.

Present:

- Mrs G Hughes (Chair)
- Mr A Fell (Vice-Chair)
- Cllr Mrs NA Armstrong
- Cllr Mrs B Brooks
- Mrs K Chaffe
- Mrs J Clark
- Mrs L Clayton
- Miss S Murphy
- Cllr D Nixon
- Cllr Mrs C Rose
- Mr R Tracy
- Cllr S Wallace

Officers in

Attendance:

- Mrs R Rance (Chief Executive)
- Mr S Feast (Business Services Director)
- Mr F McElhinney (Customer Services Director)
- Mr J Nicholl (Acting Finance Manager)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Miss S Miles.

2. **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

The report of the Business Services Director detailed that under the Company's Constitution at the first Board Meeting following each Annual General Meeting (AGM) that Directors of the Board shall appoint a Chair of the Board and a Vice-Chair to action in the absence of the Chair may also be appointed.

Nominations for the Chair were requested by the Business Services Director as Company Secretary.

Ginette Hughes was the sole nomination.

The Business Services Director requested nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Board.

Arthur Fell was the sole nomination.

In accepting her appointment Ginette Hughes, as the Chair, thanked all who had voted for her and looked forward to her second year as Chair of the Board.

(Cllr Christine Rose joined the meeting at this point)

AGREED (unanimously) that:

a) **Ginette Hughes be appointed as Chair of the Board.**

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

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

a) Customer Service Excellence Award

The Chair explained that the Company had been awarded the Customer Service Excellence Award, the Government's new national award for excellence in customer service which has replaced the Chartermark. The Company were praised by the Assessor in the use of Tenant Participation Tracker and continuous improvement, keeping customers at the heart. The Chair went onto thank Directors of the Board, Corporate Leadership Team and staff in their achievement.

b) Success of Build Bid as part of the Government Local Authority Building Programme

The Chair congratulated the Company on the success of the new build bid, formulated and submitted on behalf of the Council by Newark and Sherwood Homes as part of the Government Local Authority Building Programme. Newark and Sherwood District Council had been allocated 1.25 million for 4 sites, currently in the design stage. The 2nd phase of applications is to be announced in December 2010. Newark and Sherwood Homes is the Council's appointed Project Manager for the Council's Local Authority Building Scheme.

4. **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 30 JULY 2009**

AGREED (unanimously) that:

the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2009 were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Chair.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM-
Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 30 July 2009

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

5. **MINUTES FROM COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

There were no minutes for consideration.

6. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE BOARD**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the outcomes of the Annual Review of the Board and decide any changes to how the Board governs and the Company's governance arrangements to deliver the Company's Vision, Objectives and Core Values.

The report set out the dates for following year of Board meetings.

The Board discussed the report focusing on recognition that any tasks taken forward do not have a given outcome, recognising that these processes were being proposed following recommendations from KPMG when they advised the Board in their Review of the Board of Newark and Sherwood Homes 2008, together with the self assessment undertaken as part of this year's review.

Consideration was given to the Board being clear and robust on how it challenged and maintained the Company's performance. The importance of Director of the Board considering the suite of information they regularly receive on performance and raising any concerns and areas for consideration with the Chair or a member of the Executive Leadership team was emphasised. This regular suite of information being additional to the reporting to the Board at these meetings.

The Board discussed the proposals and the recommendations within the report to ensure that the governance structures in place, to enable the Board to meet future challenges.

(Mrs Jean Clark left the meeting at this point)

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) **the Board meeting cycle remain unchanged.**
- b) **the Human Resources Committee and Audit Committee meet four times a year in December, March, June and October.**
- c) **Christine Rose be appointed as Chair of the Human Resources Committee, Ginette Hughes be appointed Vice Chair of the Human Resources Committee. Lynn Clayton be appointed as Chair of the Audit Committee and Susan Murphy be appointed as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee. Following Christine Rose's move to Human Resources Committee as Chair, the Committees membership be amended to reflect and accommodate this.**
- d) **the Terms of Reference for the Human Resources Committee and the Audit Committee remain unchanged.**
- e) **the five current Strategic Lead roles for Directors of the Board be disestablished.**
- f) **the Strategic Lead role remain - to be invoked as required by the Chair.**
- g) **the Meeting Procedure be amended at point 15.1 to reflect the changes to the strategic lead role.**
- h) **a review of the induction Programme for Directors of the Board be undertaken.**

- i) a task be included in the 2010/2011 Service Improvement Plan via the current Improvement Planning Process to review the time limits currently in place on being a Director of the Board and holding the position of Chair or Vice Chair.
- j) a task be included via the 2010/2011 Service Improvement Plan current Improvement Planning Process to consider the current size of the Board.

7. AUDIT COMMISSION PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Chair introduced the report to consider and monitor action and performance 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 Chair announced to the Board that all outstanding recommendations were now completed and the Board would not lose sight of these.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the delivery of the Audit Commission re-inspection recommendations is complete.

8. IT STRATEGY

The Chair introduced the report to consider the revised Information Technology (IT) Strategy.

The report outlined how the strategy had been revised and reviewed to support the current delivery of technology. The Board discussed the terminology used in the document and the need for plain English. The Board also felt it would be useful to view the computer systems and have an overview of how they operate.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the Information Technology (IT) Strategy attached at Appendix A be approved.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The Chair introduced the report to monitor and take action to ensure the delivery of continuous improvement in equality and diversity.

The report outlined the updated plan in Appendix A, whereby an amended version was circulated to the meeting. This showed targets that have been met to date and measures in progress to meet future target dates as part of the three year plan.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) the progress on the delivery of the Equalities and Diversity Strategy via the three year action plan be noted and the revised Equalities and Diversity Strategy action plan 2008-11 is approved.

10. **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY REVIEW**

The Chair introduced the report to consider and approve the revised Company Health and Safety Policy.

The report discussed how the policy had been reviewed to take into account the existing Health and Safety legislative requirements which impact upon the Company both strategically and operationally. In carrying out the review, issues had been identified to reflect ongoing developments and continuous improvement to Health and Safety within the Company.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

a) the Health and Safety Policy attached at Appendix A be approved.

11. **REVIEW OF THE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2009/10**

The Chair introduced the report to provide the Board with an updated position regarding the position 2009/10 Investment Programme and changes to the initial proposal to reflect delivery within the Decent Homes element. The report advised the Newark and Sherwood Homes' current 2009/10 Investment Programme was approved by the Board in January 2009 and subsequently approved by NSDC at the January 2009 Cabinet.

The Investment Programme is a key factor in the achievement of the Company's strategic objectives which in turn contributes to the successful delivery of the Company's vision.

Specifically, the report identified the Decent Homes Programme is delivering as expected with tenant satisfaction remaining at a high level. We are on course to achieve the Decent Homes Standard to all of the housing stock managed by Newark and Sherwood homes on target by March 2010.

The refusal rate for Decent Homes work remains very low at less than 3% and robust procedures are in place to continue to reduce this number further.

Through effective and efficient contract management and delivery of a Value for Money service, the Investment Programme review has identified that the Decent Homes Programme will be delivered across the whole period under the projected budget.

The report considered options to incorporate additional work streams in the programme to meet identified investment need. Options of how the resources could be redirected to other investments were outlined including adaptations, smoke alarms, external insulated rendering and elemental replacements.

The report explained that if the Investment Programme was amended, it required final approval by the Council. The movement of the Programme would not reduce overall investment in properties or income to the Company; it would defer both to the 2010/11 year.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) **the Investment programme for 2009/10 be amended to:**
 - i) **Increase adaptations need by £200,000.**
 - ii) **Provide an allocation for External Insulated render in 2010/11 subject to the successful submission of a bid for match funding of £250,000.**
 - iii) **Under spend £250,000 on the 2009/10 programme to be rolled over into 2010/11.**
- b) **the changes to need within the Investment Programme for 2009/10 and the related realignment of resources for 2010/11 be recommended to the Council for approval.**

12. **INTEGRATED HOUSING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the procurement of additional modules for the Integrated Housing Management System to meet the business requirements of Newark and Sherwood Homes.

In considering the procurement, Directors of the Board would exercise the power to waive the requirements of the Code of Procedures with Respect to Contracts as the procurement would be made with International Business Systems (IBS) without obtaining three competitive quotations.

The report explained that the implementation of the Integrated Housing Management System was progressing well and a high number of staff have been involved in the project to date. The IBS Implementation and Project Consultants had commented on the thorough approach to implementation and the positivity of staff involved.

The report discussed the requirement for additional modules that had been identified and were not originally specified.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) **Section 4.3 of the Code of Procedures with Respect to Contracts be invoked in relation to the procurement of additional modules for the Integrated Housing Management System.**

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 2 items.

4. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM-**
Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 30 July 2009

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

13. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – STOCK OPTION APPRAISAL (VERBAL ITEM)**

The Directors of the Board considered the exempt item from the Chief Executive.

The meeting closed at 19.15

Chair