

## NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES

Minutes of the Meeting of **THE BOARD OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES** held on Thursday 29 April 2010 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 J Clark  
Mrs L Clayton  
Mr D Roebuck  
Cllr Mrs C Rose  
Mr K Sutton  
Mr R Tracy  
Cllr S Wallace

### **Officers in**

**Attendance:** Mrs R Rance (Chief Executive)  
Mr S Feast (Business Services Director)  
Mr A Dewberry (Asset Management & Investment Manager)  
Miss S Williamson (Finance Manager)

### 29. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Miss S Miles.

The Chair welcomed back Richard Tracy, congratulated Sarah Miles on her role as Vice Chair of the Audit Committee and introduced Ken Sutton to his first full Board meeting.

### 30. **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2010**

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

**the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2010 were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Chair.**

### 31. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 28 January 2010**

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

### 32. **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2010**

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

**the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2010 were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Chair.**

### 33. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 4 February 2010**

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

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

a) Marion Turner, Consultant to the Directors of the Board

The Chair welcomed Marion Turner Consultant to the Directors of the Board, to the Board meeting as an observer. The Chair introduced Marion who has been focussing on the appraisals which have been constructive, giving food for thought and the Chair informed the Board that the process has worked well. Confidential feedback meetings are set to take place and in time, the Company will be able to share their experiences with other ALMOs.

b) Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Gold

The Chair was delighted to announce that Newark and Sherwood Homes had been successful in gaining one of the prestigious RoSPA Gold awards, for Occupational Health and Safety. This is the highest award attainable and it is quite unusual for an organisation to be awarded gold at the first attempt.

The Chair said this was great news and is the result of a lot of hard work that has been undertaken across the Company and led by the Asset Management and Investment team.

The RoSPA award scheme is not only about reducing accidents and cases of ill health at work; it also encourages organisations to develop robust health and safety management systems. In obtaining this award Newark and Sherwood Homes have demonstrated its commitment to protecting the health and well being of its employees and others.

The details of this item was the subject of a Directors of the Board information item on 19 March 2010.

c) Integrated Business Systems (IBS)

The Chair was delighted to announce that the implementation of Capita was on budget and on time. This was due to one year's hard work by members of staff involved in the design, build and testing of the system.

Staff are now using the system and finding it more user friendly to retrieve information, revising processes, delivery to tenants, accurate, creating letters, the automation of rent arrears information and housing applications.

This new system has become part of the Company's vision "to deliver excellent Housing Services".

The Board had approved the system to provide an improved service to tenants. There were risks involved but it was a positive decision to go ahead and the Board appreciated this.

35. **MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES**

a) **Human Resources Committee held on 15 March 2010**

The Chair introduced the minutes for Boards information and consideration.

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEM –  
Human Resources Committee held on 15 March 2010**

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

b) **Audit Committee held on 25 March 2010**

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

**CONFIDENTIAL ITEM –  
Audit Committee held on 25 March 2010**

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

36. **STRATEGIC RISK REVIEW – REFERRAL REPORT**

The Chair introduced the referral report to consider the recommendation of the Audit Committee from their meeting held on 25 March 2010.

The Board asked for clarification to Risk Reference 12 and the Chair then explained how the Strategic Risk is reviewed and set each year.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the Strategic Risk Register 2010 be amended as detailed in Appendix A and B.**

37. **BUDGET 2010/11 - REVISIONS**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the revision to the income lines within the Revenue Budget for 2010/11 following the Government issuing the Final Housing Subsidy Determination and the subsequent changes to fees and charges. The report identifies the changes made to the original budget approved by the Board during January 2010.

The report outlined the updated revenue budget and the Chair explained how the deficit is reducing quite significantly.

The Finance Director then explained that with efficiency gains they are confident in delivering targets.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the original Revenue Budget for 2010/11 be updated and approved as per Appendix A.**

38. **TENANT SERVICES AUTHORITY – FINALISED REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) finalised proposals for a new Regulatory Framework and new National Standards, the impacts and implications for the Company and the actions to be undertaken to address these impacts and implications.

The report outlined the report which was self explanatory with key points as part of the understanding of making Local Offers to tenants. The onus is on the Company to make sure delivery is to TSA standards, including providing self assessment and an Annual Report to tenants.

The Board in discussion of the report found the following amendment and was highlighted as: page 7, III, second line ‘Local Standards’ should be ‘Local Offers’ and the repeated amendment to lines four and seven.

The Board discussed if ALMOs were working together. The Business Services Director responded to this and explained that the Chartered Institute of Housing and the National Federation of ALMOs were looking at how reports should look.

The Board went on to discuss how this would put tenants at the heart in local situations and would be able to find out what tenants require. The Annual Report will allow the Company to gather information during the year and give tenants’ greater empowerment. The Interim Chair of the Federation has been working with his team in preparation and also the Services Inspection Team, a joint initiative between Newark and Sherwood Homes and Nottinghamshire Community Housing Association as part of their role inspections are carried out of each other’s properties. Other suggestions would be to ask other landlords in the district to get together to discuss points with each other, enabling them free assistance in the way forward and also the National Housing Federation body for Housing Associations working to the benefit of all.

The Board enquired if money would be in the budget for regulatory work, to which the Business Services Director replied no but the cost is allowed for each year for work to improve services year on year. This was approved by the Board in January as part of the service delivery.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the processes established to develop Local Offers and the framework to deliver the TSA Standards be noted.**
- b) **the Local Offers and the framework to deliver the TSA Standards at its meeting on 22 July 2010 be considered and approved.**
- c) **the TSA Standards and Local Offers be included in the Balanced Scorecard element of the Performance Management Framework.**
- d) **the Company’s Self Assessment of how it meets the TSA Standards and Local Offers be considered and approved at the Board meeting on 22 July 2010.**
- e) **the Company’s Annual Report to Tenants be considered and approved at the Board meeting on 22 July 2010.**

39. **DECENT HOMES SUCCESSFUL DELIVERY AND COMPLETION**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the completion of the Decent Homes Programme and provide an overview of the key outcomes achieved through the successful delivery of the Decent Homes Programme by the Company.

The Board congratulated the staff and also the tenants for going through the process of having their homes made decent. It was a huge achievement, which was on time, with good standards and the budget all spent. The Board were able to see the challenges involved and went on to congratulate the Council for being so visionary and having faith to set up the Company.

The Board looked back at some of the achievements including the rebuilding of the 'Cornish' style homes at Clipstone and Bilsthorpe whereby the lower floor of the homes were removed and until work was complete, the upper level remained on props.

It was a journey the Company and gone through, working with the contractors and having the opportunity to take on apprentices for both the Company and the contractors. Before work started 46% of homes were below standard and as part of the Decent Homes work many environmental improvements have been completed.

The Board were proud of the achievements and requested a copy of the report to be forwarded to the Council and were informed that this had already taken place.

**AGREED (unanimously) that:**

- a) **the Council be notified that:**
  - i) **its requirements for all its properties to meet the Decent Homes standard by 2010 has been met.**
  - ii) **overall tenant satisfaction with the Decent Homes Programme has been 94.7%.**
- b) **the performance improvement particularly in Responsive Repairs, Value for Money and Added Value outcomes delivered in addition to the delivery of the Decent Homes Programme be noted.**
- c) **the tenants that have worked with Newark and Sherwood Homes and Newark & Sherwood District Council be thanked for their time in delivering the Decent Homes standard in all tenants' homes in the district.**
- d) **the staff be thanked for their hard work to secure the Company's success through achievement and delivery of a good 2 star service and the delivery of complex and enhanced investment through the Decent Homes Programme.**

**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.**

40. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - STOCK OPTION APPRAISAL 2009/10 AND SELF FINANCING CONSULTATION (COUNCIL HOUSING: A REAL FUTURE)**

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

*(Jean Clark and Richard Tracy left the meeting at this point)*

**To enable the Directors of the Board to complete the agenda, in accordance with Meeting Procedure Principle 2, the Chair extended the meeting twice for half an hour.**

The meeting closed at 20.13

Chair