

NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES

Minutes of the Meeting of **THE BOARD OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES** held on Wednesday 22 September 2010 at 5.15pm in the Lady Chapel, Kelham Hall.

Present: Mr A Fell (Vice Chair)
Cllr Mrs NA Armstrong
Cllr Mrs B Brooks
Mrs J Clark
Mrs L Clayton
Miss S Miles
Cllr D Nixon
Cllr Mrs C Rose
Mr K Sutton
Mr R Tracy
Cllr S Wallace

Officers in

Attendance: Mr S Feast (Business Services Director)
Mrs S Parker, (Systems & Quality Manager)
Miss S Williamson (Finance Manager)

59. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs G Hughes, Mr D Roebuck and Mrs J Solder.

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

a) Customer Service Excellence Award – Successfully Maintained

The Vice Chair announced to the Board that the Company had achieved a successful Customer Service Excellence standard award last year. It is the prestigious Government standard for customer service which replaced the Chartermark. The standard demonstrates the Company's commitment to put customers at the heart of what Newark and Sherwood Homes does and our vision "to deliver excellent Housing Services".

The Customer Service Excellence Award covers the following criteria:

- a) Customer Insight
- b) Culture of the Organisation
- c) Information and Access
- d) Delivery
- e) Timeliness and Quality of Service

To maintain the standard, the Company is required to have an annual external assessment, this was carried out on 10 September 2010 and the assessor confirmed that Newark and Sherwood Homes had successfully maintained the award with flying colours.

The following areas were noteworthy of praise:

- a) The management team leading by example and being positive role models for customer focus
- b) Improved empowerment of staff
- c) Strong performance in relation to customer focussed performance indicators
- d) Clear evidence of enthusiasm and pride within the Customer Access Team
- e) Good work in engaging young people
- f) Complaints analysis and improved services to customers

The standard contains 57 elements and the permitted number of partial compliances is 11. At the last assessment the Company had partial compliances in 4 areas. This time around Newark and Sherwood Homes were fully compliant across all elements which represents a major achievement for the Company.

The assessor also identified some areas for continuous improvement which will be focussed on to address and improve the services to customers even further.

The Customer Service Excellence award is a reflection of the high quality customer service delivered by everyone across the Company in the course of their everyday work. Congratulations and thanks were given to Directors, company Leadership team and staff on this excellent achievement.

(Stuart Wallace joined the meeting at this point)

61. **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 22 JULY 2010**

AGREED (unanimously) that:

the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2010 were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Vice Chair.

62. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM –
Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 22 July 2010**

The Vice Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

63. **TENANTS' ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10**

The Vice Chair introduced the report to consider the Tenants' Annual Report 2009/2010 and the progress made to date in developing local offers and the framework to deliver the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) standards further to the resolutions of the Board at its meeting on 22 July 2010.

The Quality and Systems Manager explained that the Tenants' Annual Report had been developed in conjunction with tenants who had decided on the calendar format. Tenants felt that the cost of the requirement to produce an Annual Report could be better justified by producing a calendar; which could potentially save tenants money elsewhere from their household budget. The cost of producing the Annual Report in this format is £1.16 a copy, less than the cost of purchasing a colour calendar which tenants felt represented good value for money.

Tenant also felt that producing the annual report in calendar format would allow the Annual Report to be “on show” throughout the year rather than a traditional report format which, tenants felt, would only be read by a relatively small number of recipients.

The Board were informed that Housing Quality Network (HQN) had provided a free independent review of the draft and their feedback was incorporated into the report.

The Board discussed the annual report, acknowledging the key role tenants had played in the development of the report, and felt that it accurately reflected the high quality services being provided to tenants in line with the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) standards. Some small wording amendments were highlighted for inclusion in the final report. Directors of the Board commented on the positive use of plain English in the annual report and the lack of jargon.

Directors of the Board asked if consideration had been given to incentivising tenants to read and comment on the Annual Report. A questionnaire will be provided with the report including the chance to be included in a prize draw by completing and returning the questionnaire.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

a) the Tenants’ Annual Report 2009/10 as amended be approved.

64. **RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

The Vice Chair introduced the report to consider the revised Risk Management Strategy, the Risk Register and the related proposed changes to the management of risk.

The report outlined the revised Risk Management Strategy and in particular the Risk Matrix which has been updated to reflect good practice in respect of risk management. As part of this revision the Company’s risk appetite has also been considered and amended. In addition the Risk Register has also been revisited to provide a basis from which the revised risk strategy can be implemented.

The Finance Manager highlighted that the revised Risk Management Strategy requires the Board to consider the risks highlighted in relation to specific matters through the reports presented to Board and Committee meetings. The reports will be monitored and a monthly update to the Strategic Risk Register will be provided through the Director of the Board information system.

Directors of the Board noted the issue of the completed Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Risk Management Strategy. The EIA had been completed in line with the Company’s Equality and Diversity Strategy which requires the consideration of equality and diversity issues throughout the development of Strategies and Policies to be documented in the EIA which is then published on the Company’s website.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

a) the Risk Management Strategy, Strategic Risk Register and Risk Matrix at Appendices A, B and C be approved.

65. **MINUTES OF THE STOCK OPTION APPRAISAL BOARD MEETING HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2009**

AGREED (unanimously) that:

the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2010 were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Vice Chair.

66. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – Minutes of the Stock Option Appraisal Board Meeting held on 23 September 2009**

The Vice Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

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.

The meeting closed at 18.03

Chair