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NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES

Minutes of the Meeting of **THE BOARD OF NEWARK AND SHERWOOD HOMES** held on Thursday 14 April 2011 at 5.00pm in the Lady Chapel, Kelham Hall.

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

Officers in Attendance: Mrs R Rance (Chief Executive)
Mr S Feast (Business Services Director)
Mr A Dewberry (Asset Management & Investment Manager)
Ms M Jenkins (HR & Communications Manager)
Miss C Meek (Customer Access & Support Manager)
Miss S Williamson (Finance Manager)

33. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apology for absence was received from Mrs L Clayton and Mr D Roebuck.

34. **MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 27 JANUARY 2011**

AGREED (unanimously) that:

the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2011 were accepted as a correct record of events and signed by the Chair.

35. **CONFIDENTIAL ITEM –
Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 27 January 2011**

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

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

a) **RoSPA Gold**

The Chair was delighted to announce that Newark and Sherwood Homes had once again been successful in gaining one of the prestigious RoSPA Gold Awards, for Occupational Health and Safety. This is the highest award attainable and demonstrates the Company's commitment to protecting health and well being of its employees and others through a process of continuous improvement.

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b) Tony Smith

With regret and sadness the Chair informed the Board of the death of a member of Newark and Sherwood Homes' staff team, Mr Tony Smith. Tony joined Newark and Sherwood District Council in January 1999 as a part-time Estate Caretaker and transferred to Newark and Sherwood Homes keeping the same role for his 12 years of service. Tony was well known and respected in the communities of Newark and Sherwood, in particular at the Seven Hills homeless scheme where Tony had helped make a difference to many vulnerable people.

c) Vale View Quality Assessment Framework

The Chair informed the Board that following a recent validation visit by Nottinghamshire County Council's Supporting People team, Newark and Sherwood Homes had been awarded a "B" rating for Safeguarding and Support Planning at the Vale View scheme in Newark. This rating recognises the high level of support provided at Vale View and the hard work and dedication of the staff team.

d) Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Award

The Chair was delighted to announce another success for Newark and Sherwood Homes. At the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) awards for the Central region, Newark and Sherwood Homes won the Equality and Diversity award for the project "Equal Players".

The project was devised by the Equality and Diversity Continuous Improvement Group who wrote, developed and acted in plays aimed at questioning misconceptions, stereotypes and attitudes towards different diverse groups. As a result of winning the Central region award, the project has automatically been nominated for the TPAS national award in July.

37. **MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES**

a) **Audit Committee held on 14 March 2011**

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

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM –
Audit Committee held on 14 March 2011

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

b) **Human Resources Committee held on 16 March 2011**

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

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM –
Human Resources Committee held on 16 March 2011

The Chair introduced the confidential minutes.

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38. SUPPORTING PEOPLE FUNDING CHANGES

(Stuart Wallace declared a conflict of interest at this point as Deputy Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health with Nottinghamshire County Council)

The Chair introduced the report to consider the impact of the proposed £10 million savings to be made to Supporting People funding by March 2015 and actions to be undertaken to manage these impacts.

The Board debated aspects from the report including Nottinghamshire Community Housing Association (NCHA), a partner with Newark and Sherwood Homes at Vale View, recently informing that as a result of the changes to Supporting People contracts, they no longer intend to meet the full cost of services provided to NCHA tenants at Vale View by Newark and Sherwood Homes. Discussions are still taking place between the two parties to look for solutions.

The Board, whilst acknowledging the challenges faced by the County Council and by Stuart Wallace in his role as a County Councillor; felt that the services provided by Newark and Sherwood Homes currently funded through Supporting People were essential to many vulnerable tenants. The proposed changes will put these tenants at risk and will place a far greater financial burden on other statutory services and Newark and Sherwood Homes through a transference of responsibility.

The changes to Supporting People contracts will mean in future a block amount will be received for each contract rather than receiving an allocation grant amount per person. This matter is highlighted in greater detail in the report: Supporting People Contract Changes.

The Board discussed the impact of managing these funding reductions to the Company and other agencies.

AGREED that:

- a) the actions being undertaken to consider and manage the full impacts of changes to Supporting People funding and the Supporting People contracts be endorsed.**

(Stuart Wallace left the meeting at this point)

39. SUPPORTING PEOPLE CONTRACT CHANGES

The Chair introduced the report to consider the advice received from Nottinghamshire County Council relating to Supporting People contracts and the Company's proposed transitional arrangements.

It was explained that Newark and Sherwood Homes was taking legal advice on the content of the proposed contracts which have been implemented unilaterally, with minimal consultation and transfer responsibility for contract administration and assessment to the service provider.

The report outlined a summary of interim arrangements and proposals for transitional relief to meet charges for Careline, Generic Lifeline and Cross Tenure Careline service users. The report also detailed the impacts of interim arrangements,

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along with actions to be taken during the interim period. Newark and Sherwood Homes will work closely with tenants and service users to update them on forthcoming changes.

The Board discussed the careline service block payment Newark and Sherwood Homes will receive from Supporting People, which equates to 50% of those tenants who currently receive the service and the remaining 50% meeting the cost of the service themselves.

The Board discussed the proposed interim arrangements and was supportive of the approach to continue to provide support services to vulnerable tenants throughout the district.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) **transitional relief be implemented to supplement Supporting People Grant in meeting the costs of careline services during 2011/12 for tenants who would have received Supporting People Grant under arrangements prior to April 2011.**
- b) **£14,000 be approved from Company Balances to meet the potential cost of the transitional relief.**
- c) **consultation will continue to be undertaken with tenants and other service users to inform them of future changes to services, related costs and charges.**

40. **ANNUAL REPORT SURVEY**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the feedback received on the Tenants' Annual Report 2009/10 and consider the future format of the Tenants' Annual Report.

The report outlined tenants' feedback on the first Annual Report produced by the Company and a comparison of the Annual Report survey results to those of the Status survey carried out in 2009/10.

The Board discussed the results and the marked improvement from the previous survey, thanking everyone for their hard work.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) **it is pleasing to see the outcome of the Tenant Survey on the Annual Report 2009/10 showing:**
 - i. **overall, 91% of tenants are satisfied with the services received from Newark and Sherwood Homes.**
 - ii. **89% of tenants are satisfied with the way Newark and Sherwood Homes deal with repairs.**
 - iii. **92% of tenants are satisfied with the quality of their homes.**
 - iv. **90% of tenants are satisfied with their neighbourhoods.**
- b) **it is particularly pleasing to see from the Tenant Survey on the Annual Report 2009/10, the increase of 25% satisfaction in taking tenants' views into account at 86%.**

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- c) **a letter of thanks be sent to the TSA Steering Group and the Newark and Sherwood District Federation of Tenants and Residents Association for their significant and valued contribution to this improvement in service delivery.**

41. **REVISION OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the revised Equality and Diversity Strategy.

The report outlined how the review of the strategy had been undertaken with full consultation with tenants, leaseholders and other key stakeholders to take on board their views and opinions.

The Board discussed the introduction of the nine protected characteristics, superseding the six strands of Equality and Diversity and acknowledged the importance of Equality and Diversity in developing and delivery services.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) **the Equality and Diversity Strategy be approved.**

42. **REVISION OF THE ACCESS AND CUSTOMER CARE STRATEGY**

The Chair introduced the report to consider the revised Access and Customer Care Strategy as attached at Appendix A.

The report outlined how the strategy had been reviewed to ensure that Newark and Sherwood Homes continues to build on and improve the current levels of access and customer care provided to tenants, leaseholders and other customers.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) **the Access and Customer Care Strategy be approved.**

43. **REVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

The Chair introduced the report advising the Board of the completion of the review of the Communications Strategy in accordance with Company Key Task CKT10-13 and to consider the revised strategy at Appendix A.

The report outlined how the strategy sets out an overall approach the Company will take through effective use of communications, developing service delivery to support business objectives and delivery of the Business Plan.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) **the Communications Strategy at Appendix A be approved.**

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44. DIRECTORS OF THE BOARD EXTERNAL APPRAISALS

The Chair introduced the report to propose the delay of the next external appraisal of Directors of the Board and the progression of the internal appraisal process for 2010/11 governance year.

The report explained that the Board undertakes an annual review of both the Board as a whole and individual Directors of the Board.

The Board discussed the impact of not progressing the external appraisal of Directors of the Board, also providing an efficiency for the year and progression of the internal appraisal process.

AGREED (unanimously) that:

- a) **the Directors of the Board external appraisal be delayed for a year and an internal appraisal be progressed for 2010/11 governance year.**

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.

45. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM - BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

The Directors of the Board considered the exempt item from the Business Services Director.

(Christine Rose left the meeting at this point)

46. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – SELF FINANCING HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

(Arthur Fell left the meeting at this point)

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

To enable the Directors of the Board to complete the agenda, in accordance with Meeting Procedure Principle 2, the Chair extended the meeting for fifteen minutes.

47. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM – WORKING TOGETHER – JOINT EFFICIENCY

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

The meeting closed at 19.15

Chair