

STRATEGIC BOARD

MINUTES of the **Public Meeting** held on **29 MARCH 2007** at 14 Hounds Gate from 5.30pm to 7.25pm.

Strategic Board Members:

Ade Aderogba MBE	Independent Board Member
Tim Bell	Independent Board Member
Georgina Culley	Council Board Member
Anne Dean (Vice Chair)	Tenant Board Member
Roger Hursthouse	Independent Board Member
Martyn Kingsford	Co-opted Independent Board Member
Peter Linford	Independent Board Member
Dave Liversidge	Council Board Member
Margaret Pugsley	Tenant Board Member
Paul Rowe (Chair)	Independent Board Member
Valerie Schneider	Tenant Board Member
Janet Storar	Tenant Board Member
Tony Sutton	Council Board Member
Paul Wisher	Independent Board Member
Malcolm Wood	Council Board Member

Also in Attendance:

Jean England	Chair of the Council Tenants Forum
Tim Harris	Interim Director of Housing Operations
Glenn Langham	Corporate Health & Safety Officer
Chris Langstaff	Chief Executive
Janet Locker	Governance Team Leader
Simon Sweetinburgh	Interim Company Secretary
Jo Wileman	Director of Organisational Development

The Chair welcomed Jean England; Chair of the Council Tenants' Forum, David Angus, the Interim Director of Property Services, and Glenn Langham the Corporate Health & Safety Officer to the meeting.

114 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from John Harris, Howard Morris and Tom Stephenson.

115 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY BOARD MEMBERS & OFFICERS

No declarations were received.

**116 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
1 MARCH 2007**

The Board adopted the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting subject to the following amendments to the register of attendance:

- (i) Roger Hursthouse was in attendance; and
- (ii) Martyn Kingsford had submitted his apologies.

117 MATTERS ARISING

No matters arising were raised.

118 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Chief Executive. The purpose of the report was to update the Board on a number of issues since the last meeting of the Board.

The Chief Executive Officer informed the Board that a draft Foundation Plan had been produced for consultation with a view to finalising the proposals by 5 April 2007.

The Board heard that the Company was aiming to launch the new Tenant Compact during Housing Week which will be in the first week of June 2007.

The Chief Executive Officer informed the Board that work on the Strategic Plan had commenced and a small project team had been established from across the Company.

A series of roadshows had been scheduled for early May 2007 to enable the Executive Management Team (EMT) to communicate the key messages, enable staff to have a dialogue with the EMT and encourage cross organisational networking and team building.

In response to a query, the Chief Executive confirmed that the Company was to embark on a major culture change programme that would embed strong business awareness across the workforce.

The report was noted.

119 COMPANY SECRETARY'S REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Acting Company Secretary. The purpose of the report was to advise the Board of a number of Company matters that had arisen since the last meeting of the Board.

The Acting Company Secretary informed the Board that the Terms of Reference for the Repairs Tender Task Group had been drafted, would be circulated to its members for consultation and submitted to the Board for approval at its next meeting.

The Board was asked to approve the revised (interim) Financial Regulations on the recommendation of the Performance & Regulatory Committee who met on 20 March 2007, noting that all matters relating to the annual Internal Audit Plan were the responsibility of the Audit Committee.

RESOLUTIONS

THE BOARD:

- 1. Accepted and noted the resignation of Jane Jobarteh;**
- 2. Noted the development of the Company registry and the annual update of Board Members interests to take place in July 2007;**

3. **Ratified the membership of the Repairs Tender Task Group as Paul Rowe, Valerie Schneider, Peter Linford and Tony Sutton.**
3. **Approved the interim Financial Regulations.**

120 2007/2008 BUDGET

The Head of Finance presented a report to the Board and advised that the report had been presented to the Performance & Regulatory Committee on 20 March 2007.

The Head of Finance gave a summary of the budget and advised that it would break even in line with the years projected outturn. The Board was advised that the budget showed a decline in income on forecast outturn for 2006/07 of Five million One hundred thousand pounds (£5.1m) which was mainly due to reductions in capital works, the management fee and the loss of some Supporting People income. A one-off investment programme had been agreed by the Council of One million, five hundred thousand pounds (£1.5m) to fund projects in financial year 2007/2008 to accelerate the Company achieving the two star performance. Each of the projects would be subject to the submission of a business case, to Executive Management Team and noted at P&R.

The Board was reminded that in the summer of 2006, the Company prepared a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which identified the need for it to make significant cost savings to ensure that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) retained a positive working balance. Since that time, a number of assumptions made in the MTFP have revised, and therefore the MTFP will need to be updated.

In addition, cost reductions had been made in line with the reduced activity. Costs included a moderate provision for potential redundancy costs and contingency to cover absences during the District Audit investigations and cost savings and Value for Money (VFM) efficiencies had been factored in to the budgets. However, the figures did not include:

- Additional pension strain;
- Costs for implementing the accommodation strategy;
- Incremental Information Communication Technology (ICT) costs to support the ICT Strategy; and
- Incremental cost to support delivery of the Housing Patch Manager (HPM) review.

A discussion was held in relation to the current Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and it was noted that although work had been undertaken on the matter, further work was required to ensure the Company and the Council could make an informed decision over the future arrangements.

The Board raised concerns that although the Company had made some significant cost savings, Retained Housing had budgeted for a substantial increase for the forthcoming financial year. The Head of Finance advised that this was to be reviewed with the Council as part of some ongoing work to review the HRA.

The Head of Finance brought a number of risks and opportunities to the Board's attention and confirmed that the risks and opportunities would be managed as part of ongoing reviews of financial performance at senior management level. She alerted them to one specific risk which was capital fee income maybe below budget and advised that the Council had now indicated that they were budgeting for a

substantially lower level of capital fee. She advised the Board that discussions with the Council are taking place and updates will be provided to a future meeting once the discussions had been concluded.

The Board raised concern in relation to the increased overhead rate. The Interim Director of Property Services explained the significance of the overheads and the impact they would have on the bids. He stated that they appeared as fixed costs.

The Chief Executive Officer informed the Board that the repairs tender was a crucial piece of work for the Company valued at approximately thirty million pounds (£30m) per year for seven years. The Repairs Tender Task Group would be undertaking work to assist the Company in preparing the in-house tender bid.

The Interim Director of Property Services advised the Board of the timescales to be met and stated the Company needed to have the in-house bid ready to go out by the end of August 2007. He further advised it was in his opinion that the earliest the contract could be let would be 1 April 2008.

He informed the Board that a meeting had been arranged with the Council's Director of Finance to agree how to progress the tender forward in a timeframe that allows all the issues and risks to be managed.

RESOLUTION

THAT:

The Board approved the Nottingham City Homes 2007/2008 budget.

121 REVISED NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Consideration was given to a report of the Corporate Health & Safety Officer. The purpose of the report was to present the revised Health & Safety Policy to ensure the Company's compliance with the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HASAWA). The Board agreed the policy subject to amendments to the first aider, fire warden, and assaults on staff sections (where appropriate links to the ASB Strategy were agreed).

The Board noted that work on the Smoking Policy was in hand, and that a significant training programme for staff (and also for Board members) was in planning stage. It was noted that NCH have a higher duty of care because of working in people's homes.

The Board was asked to endorse their agreement of the revised policy by individually signing and dating the master document at a future date to be agreed.

The Board praised the work of the Corporate Health & Safety Officer.

RESOLUTIONS

The Board:

- **approved the revised Health & Safety Policy subject to the amendments noted, and any further reasonable amendments put forward by the unions;**

- **agreed to endorse the revised Health and Safety Policy by individually signing and dating a master version;**
- **agreed to the launch of the revised Health and Safety Policy to the workforce**

122 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:

122.1 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

The Company Secretary presented a report, for information, which advised the Board of the Committee meetings that had been held since it last met.

The Board noted the report.

122.2 BOARD ROLLING WORKPLAN 2007

The Board noted the workplan.

123 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

123.1 Letter from Dennis Rees had been received by the Chair inviting Members of the Board to join a networking group for ALMO Board Members. The Chair advised that he had responded to Dennis Rees on behalf of the Board.

123.2 Letter from Dennis Rees Chair of the National Federation of ALMOs (NFA) had been received by the Chair inviting nominations to the NFA Awards Ceremony. A copy of the letter shall be circulated to all Members for information only.

113 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Board was advised that the date of the next meeting was scheduled for 26 April 2007, however, it was agreed that the meeting would be cancelled and re-arranged for 17 May 2007 in the Board Room, 14 Hounds Gate, Nottingham, NG1 7BA at 5.30pm.

The Meeting ended at 7.20pm.

SIGNED..... DATE.....