

THE BOARD

MINUTES of the **Public Meeting** held on **20 NOVEMBER 2008** at 14 Hounds Gate from 5:30 pm to 7:05 pm.

Board Members:

Ade Aderogba
Graham Chapman (left 6:30 pm)
Anne Dean
Harry Everington
Martyn Kingsford
Peter Linfood
David Liversidge
Margaret Pugsley
Paul Rowe (Chair)
Valerie Schneider
Janet Storar
Graham Ward
Malcolm Wood

Also in Attendance:

Julie Crook	Director of Finance, ICT & Governance
Mark Johnson	Director of Property Services
Chris Langstaff	Chief Executive
Janet Locker	Senior Governance Officer
Alison Mapp	Company Secretary & Solicitor
Gill Moy	Director of Housing Operations
Ian Perry	Estate & Caretaker Services Manager
Martinette Proud	Interim Director of Organisation Development (left 6:55 pm)
Melanie Rees	Audit Commission (left 6:25 pm)
Amanda Schofield	Director of Strategy & Partnerships

08/38 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS & CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed Melanie Rees, Audit Commission Inspector to the meeting.

08/39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

08/40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

**08/41 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
18 SEPTEMBER 2008**

The Board adopted the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

08/42 MATTERS ARISING FROM BOARD MINUTES

08/42.1 Minute Ref: 08/28

The Chair asked the Chief Executive (CEX) to clarify the position in relation to Board members signing the Company's Health & Safety Policy. The CEX confirmed that the policy had now been signed.

08/42.2 Minute Ref: 08/34

The Chair referred to the minute that stated the Equality & Diversity Strategy would be presented to this meeting. The Director of Strategy & Partnership informed the Board the strategy was under review and that consultation with the BME and Homes 4 Us Forums had taken place who had expressed a desire to hold an equality and diversity event, with particular attention to be paid to young people and people who suffer with mental health. A discussion had been held with Ade Aderogba and Valerie Schneider regarding community cohesion, it was suggested that a steering group for the strategy be formed.

08/43 COMPANY SECRETARY'S REPORT – REVIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

The Company Secretary & Solicitor present a report which updated the Board on the joint discussions held with Nottingham City Council (NCC) in relation to extending the Management Agreement to 2013 and broaden the scope of the Agreement in line with NCCs regeneration strategy.

The CEX explained that NCC would like to achieve the scope process within twelve months. However, a decision was expected by May 2009 as the Company wanted to begin the new cycle for the financial year and this could only be achieved if agreement had been reached.

The CEX advised that the matter would be reported to the March 2009 Board meeting. Following further discussion it was agreed that the matter be referred to the Performance & Regulatory (P&R) Committee. Martyn Kingsford volunteered to join the P&R Committee.

It was agreed that the recommendation be amended to include the Board in the scoping discussions.

RESOLUTIONS

The Board:

- 1. agreed that the Management Agreement for the delivery of landlord services be extended to the end of the financial year 2012/13;**
- 2. noted that Martyn Kingsford had volunteered to join the Performance & Regulatory Committee; and**
- 2. be involved in the scoping discussions and to confirm proposals to extend the scope of the Agreement.**

08/44 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Chief Executive (CEX) which briefed the Board on some of the ongoing key matters.

08/44.1 Financial Position at Period 6

The CEX reported that the financial issues had been reported to the P&R Committee. Martyn Kingsford commented in relation to the digital aerals and asked that the tenants and leaseholders be kept informed via an article in the Newsletter.

The Director of Property Services (DPS) advised the Board that the switch to digital was planned to occur in 2012 and the programme the Company has in place will commence at the Victoria Centre. The DPS reported that the Company was leading the field in this area.

08/44.2 Performance at Period 6

Martyn Kingsford thanked the voids and rent teams for their work in improving the performance in the respective areas. He raised the sensitive issue of investment to save and stated the company had to maintain investment.

The CEX responded that there was a year end target of three hundred and the Company expects to meet the target.

The Director of Housing Operations (DHO) confirmed that there had been slippage in the voids performance this had been attributed to the staffing restructure that occurred in 2007/08. New targets had been set for September 2008 which was achieved and the performance was now on track.

The DHO informed the Board that over one hundred per cent of rent was collected in October 2008.

08/44.3 Nottingham City Homes Window and Door Procurement

Graham Chapman raised concern about the tender being awarded to out side of region and the impact on recruiting locally. The DPS re-assured the Board that the tender was subject to a European exercise and was publicised locally and nationally and that the one in a million scheme (one trainee for every one million pounds spent on the contract), and with the contract being worth thirty one million pounds, meant that there was a potential for Yorkshire Windows Company to take on thirty one trainees.

08/44.4 Housing Services Centre

Tim Bell suggested that the Company use space within the Housing Services Centre to advertise for Board Members. Poster to include the contact details of the Governance team.

Graham Ward asked if there was an agreed date for the opening of the tenant Resource Centre. The DHO advised that the Working Group were planning the event however, a date had not been set.

08/44.5 Organisational Development

The Board was pleased to see the sick absence target reducing.

The Board recognised the work involved in the Health & Safety Survey.

The Board asked the DPS to pass on the Board's congratulations to Rae Crown the winner of the Association of Public Service Excellence award.

The Board noted the report.

08/45 DRAFT DELIVERY PLAN

The Director of Strategy & Partnership (DSP) presented the draft Delivery Plan which had been previously discussed at the Board Away Day. The Board was advised that a requirement of the Management Agreement was that the Delivery Plan is submitted to Nottingham City Council each financial year. It was reported that the Delivery Plan was submitted on 31 October 2008.

The Board was informed that the Delivery Plan was designed to set out the annual action plan, performance targets and had been developed in consultation with tenants, leaseholders and other organisations.

The CEX confirmed that the Company was working with NCC on the regeneration programme and there would be no impact for the next year's delivery plan.

The Board noted the report and agreed to feedback comments to the Director of Strategy & Partnerships.

08/46 BUDGET 2009-2010

The Director of Finance, ICT & Governance (DFIG) gave a presentation on the Budget 2009-2010 to the Board and advised that the same presentation would be presented to the Area Panels.

The DFIG explained the calculation for the rent increase for the new financial year. The Government was consulting on two options, although it was giving a clear indication as to which option it would prefer local authorities to use. The Board was informed that NCC and NCH would continue to consult with tenants and other stakeholders.

The CEX emphasised that the Government project the rent increase figures and NCC decide the actual rent increase.

The Board delegated the responsibility to respond to the Governments consultation paper to the CEX and suggested that the response be placed in the House of Commons. The CEX stated that the local Ministers of Parliament would be lobbied.

The DFIG advised the Board that a comparison had been made of the benchmarking undertaken in 2006/07 when the result was high cost low

performance with an average cost per property of six hundred and ninety-five pounds, to 2007/08 second quartile, the cost per property had reduced to four hundred and forty-six, which was moving in the right direction.

The DFIG confirmed that beyond 2009/10 a joint working group with NCC would review housing finance.

The Board was advised that the budget bid would be submitted to NCC January and March 2009 and a report would be presented to the P& R Committee in February 2009. The Company had bid for a further one million pounds, which had been cut from the previous years budget, the money would be used for spend to save initiatives to assist the Company re-engineer its business.

The Board was informed that in the current financial climate it would be harder to deliver of the front line services.

RESOLUTIONS:

The Board:

- 1. confirmed their agreement to the strategic direction; and**
- 2. delegated the authority to respond to the consultation paper on the draft housing subsidy determination to the Chief Executive.**

08/47 REVIEW OF THE CARETAKING SERVICE

The Estate and Caretaking Manager presented the report of the Director of Housing Operations and highlighted the key areas. The background of the review was explained.

The Board was advised that the service had been expanded to include a basic sweeping service to areas that previously had received no service at all. The improved service had been funded partly through the savings identified in the review and savings achieved in the restructure.

Forty-four employees have already achieved the professional qualification British Institute of Cleaning Science Cleaning Standard and it is planned to train a further four caretakers in January 2009.

The report was well received by the Board. However, the Chair raised the issue of the cost of service to the tenants and leaseholders and requested that the P&R Committee review the financial workings of the service.

RESOLUTIONS:

The Board:

- 1. requested the Performance & regulatory Committee undertake a review of the financial aspects of the caretaking service; and**
- 2. noted the remainder of the report**

08/48 FORWARD PLAN

- (i) The Forward Plan for the Board and considered.

The Board noted the Forward Plan.

08/49 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

08/49.1 INSPECTION UPDATE

The CEX gave an update on the feedback received from the Inspection team. He advised that the inspection had started on 17 November 2008 and the tenants inspectors had spent two days out and about on the estates and local housing offices and the Inspection team were taken on a tour of the estates.

The CEX felt that although it was early days the general feeling was that the inspection was going well. There was a need to keep our feet on the ground.

The EMT had received written feedback that day; it was the first of three, the next to be received on 25 November and the last when the Inspection team leave the site. The EMT has been invited to comment, the CEX advised that there had been some really strong comments. There had been strong and positive comments received from the staff and the focus groups.

The CEX reported that an area the Company needed to focus on was empty properties and this would be looked at.

Initial feedback from the lead inspector was that she could see a very significant improvement.

Malcolm Wood raised the matter of the Denton Green property which had previously been housing by housing management and had remained boarded up and empty for over one year. The CEX responded saying that there were a number of properties that had been referred to NCC to bring back into use or dispose of due to the cost. These properties would be dealt with through the capital programme and there is no funding at present. The DHO confirmed that the Denton Green property would cost in excess of thirty thousand pounds to bring back into use.

The DSP informed the Board that the areas for enquiry, in relation to Governance were:

- (i) The role of the Board
- (ii) Service users and drive
- (iii) What's the Board's involvement in service improvements; and
- (iv) Relationship with NCC

The CEX asked the Board how best to communicate the findings of the inspection as there was not a Board meeting until 22 January 2009. The Chair suggested a short briefing session. The CEX informed the Board

that the formal public report was expected in January 2009. It was agreed that the CEX would manage the communication.

08/50 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Board agreed that the date of the next meeting is scheduled for 22 January 2009 in the Board Room, 14 Hounds Gate, Nottingham, NG1 7BA at 5.30pm.

08/51 TO CONSIDER EXCLUDING THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMPANY'S ACCESS POLICY

08/52 CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2008

The Board adopted the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

The Meeting ended at 8:10 pm.

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