



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

11 July 2013

(at Kibblesworth Lounge, Kibblesworth Community Centre)

PRESENT:

Directors

Barbara Dennis (Chair)
Sheila Bouitieh
Robert Buckley
Joanne Carr
Mick Davison
Pauline Dillon
Kathryn Ferdinand
Paul Foy
Eileen Gill
Helen Hall
John Hamilton
Peter Mole
Joachim Moussounda Mouanda
Gordon Spring

Advisers

Jon Mallen-Beadle	Managing Director
Neil Bouch	Director of Customers and Communities
Natalie Hewitt	Head of Corporate Services
Phil Gallagher	Head of Investment and Development
Kevin Johnson	Head of Customer Services
Julie McCartney	Head of Neighbourhood Services
Stuart Gibson	Governance and Risk Officer

Apologies

George Clark

22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

23 BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Board was informed at its last meeting on 14 May 2013 of the half day development session held on 30 April 2013 primarily focussed on developing interested SIG members.

Following the half day development session, the Company received four applications to become Tenant Directors. All four applicants were shortlisted and interviews took place with a Panel consisting of Barbara Dennis, John Hamilton and Robert Buckley on 17 June 2013. Following the interviews, the Panel recommended that Sheila Bouitieh and Helen Hall be appointed as Tenant Directors.

Both Sheila Bouitieh and Helen Hall have been members of TALISMAN (Tenant and Leasehold Independent Scrutiny Management) since it was established in 2012.

If appointed, in accordance with Article 17 of the Company's Articles of Association Sheila and Helen will hold office until the next Annual General Meeting.

RESOLVED – That the appointment of Sheila Bouitieh and Helen Hall as Tenant Directors on the Board be approved.

24 WELFARE REFORM

The Board received a presentation from the Head of Customer Services on mitigating the impact of Welfare Reform on Council Housing.

In particular, tenants affected, the impact of reduced benefit, reduction in number affected, discretionary housing payments, rent arrear issues, issues of low demand for properties and mitigations considered by the Council to date were highlighted.

RESOLVED – That the presentation be noted.

25 SPENDING REVIEW IMPLICATIONS

The Managing Director presented a briefing update from the Northern Housing Consortium responding to the 2013 Spending Round which sets out departmental spending budgets for the year 2015/16, the first of the next parliament.

In particular, housing capital investment, rent policy and the Single Local Growth Fund were highlighted.

RESOLVED – That the Northern Housing Consortium's briefing update be noted.

26 MINUTES

The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 14 May 2013 were approved as a correct record.

27 REPORT ON THE STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL – 2012/13

It is a requirement under the UK Corporate Governance Code that companies undertake, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of their systems of internal control. A company's board should undertake this review for the

purposes of making its public Statement of Internal Control, which is published as part of the financial statements.

The statement of internal control for the year ended 31 March 2013 was considered by Audit Committee on 3 July 2013 and it recommended approval to the Board.

RESOLVED – That the Statement of Internal Control contained with the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2013 be approved.

28 DIRECTORS' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – 2012/13

The Audit Committee, at its meeting held on 3 July 2013, scrutinised the report and statements and recommended that they be approved by the Board, subject to a minor amendment.

The report and financial statements for 2012/13 will be presented to the company's Annual General Meeting, which will be held after the meeting of the Board on 19 September 2013.

RESOLVED – That the Directors' Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2013 be approved.

(Kathryn Ferdinand declared an interest in this matter as she works for the HMRC and reference was made in the Report to the VAT rebate)

29 KPMG REPRESENTATION LETTER – YEAR ENDED MARCH 2013

The Company's external auditors KPMG carried out an audit of the report and financial statements for 2012/13 during May 2013. A report presenting their findings was approved by Audit Committee at its meeting on 3 July 2013.

As part of the audit, KPMG require the management representation letter to be signed by the Chair and the Company Secretary on behalf of the Board. Audit Committee, at its meeting on 3 July 2013, recommended that the Board authorise the Chair and Company Secretary to sign the letter on its behalf.

RESOLVED – That the Chair and Company Secretary be authorised to sign the management representation letter on behalf of the Board.

30 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

The minutes of the following committees were submitted: -

- Assets, Development and Investment Committee – 20 June 2013
- Audit Committee – 3 July 2013

RESOLVED – (i) That the minutes be noted.

(ii) That regular tours be arranged to look at key sites to enable Board Members to familiarise themselves with issues being discussed at the Board/committee.

31 RESULTS OF ANNUAL SURVEY 2013

The committee was informed of the results of the Annual Survey for Tenants and Leaseholders 2013 which was issued in May/June asking six standard questions.

Overall there were 1,266 tenant respondents and 44 leasehold respondents. Positively, the results of the survey show that tenant satisfaction continues to remain very high and in most areas has improved on last year.

Satisfaction with rent and service charges providing good value for money has increased. Given that the closing date for the annual survey was 6 May 2013 it is unlikely that this survey captured the impact of the Housing Benefit changes introduced in April 2013. It is therefore expected that these measures are more likely be reflected in the results of the 2014 survey.

Particular reference was made to leasehold satisfaction which has increased significantly in all areas except satisfaction with the neighbourhood.

In addition to gauging satisfaction, the annual survey is also used to identify customer priorities, helping to ensure that resources and efforts continue to be directed into the areas customers identify.

Tenant priorities have been consistent for a number of years and this survey reflected this with the priorities being high quality, timely repairs, well maintained estates and tackling anti-social behaviour.

Leasehold priorities were well maintained estates, being able to access services by phone, online, in person and other ways and tackling anti-social behaviour.

The Annual Survey is used primarily as a benchmarking tool to monitor trends in satisfaction which then may prompt further investigation or action if there was an evident decline in satisfaction. However, it is recognised that for some customers, this may be the only occasion a customer chooses to interact with the company. Therefore, all respondents are given the opportunity to mark the survey if they would like a follow up call to discuss the responses they have provided.

Results of this survey will be communicated to all tenants and leaseholders in the July edition of TGHC News and will feature in the annual report to tenants and leaseholders.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted and Officers be congratulated on such positive results.

32 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

The following item has been posted on the Company's website: -

- Forward Plan

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

33 FEEDBACK FROM OUTSIDE BODIES AND EVENTS

The following feedback from outside bodies and events was reported: -

- Kathryn Ferdinand expressed her satisfaction with the TGHC stall at the Blaydon Festival in May.
- Kathryn Ferdinand thanked the Blaydon Housing Manager and staff for continuing to work professionally whilst being disrupted by changes to Blaydon Town Centre.
- Paul Foy gave very positive feedback about the CIH Conference in Manchester in June. It was noted that the biggest issues were around Welfare Reform and health, social care and housing which was an area that was growing significantly in housing.
- Robert Buckley referred to a recent meeting he attended around health and wellbeing and that the Public Health Team had agreed to invite TGHC to a training session being organised.

Paul Foy referred to Gateshead Council community event last week and presentation from Carole Wood, Director of Public Health on the launch of the Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Board. It was agreed that a copy of the slides from her presentation be posted on the Board Members Website. It was suggested invited Carole to give a presentation at a future meeting of the Board.

It was suggested having a Board Workshop around public health and wellbeing inviting the Clinical Commissioning Group, GPs and Public Health.

- Jon Mallen-Beadle and Helen Hall attended a very positive NFA Conference on 9 and 10 July 2013. The presentations from the Conference will be posted on the Board Members Website.

- RESOLVED –
- (i) That the feedback be noted.
 - (ii) That a copy of the slides from presentation by Carole Wood, Public Health Director be posted on the Board Members Website.
 - (iii) That the next Board Away Day in September also include a workshop around public health and wellbeing as outlined above.
 - (iv) That the presentations from the NFA Conference be posted on the Board Members Website.

34 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board Meeting will be held on Thursday 19 July 2013 at 10am in the Board Rooms at Keelman House, Fifth Avenue Business Park, Fifth Avenue, Team Valley, Gateshead.

35 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining business in accordance with the indicated categories of the Company's Access to Information Rules.