



## RESOURCES COMMITTEE

7 May 2013

### PRESENT:

#### Directors

John Hamilton (Chair)  
Mick Davison  
Robert Buckley  
George Clark  
Paul Foy

#### Advisers

Jon Mallen-Beadle	Managing Director
Phil Gallagher	Head of Investments & Development
Natalie Hewitt	Head of Corporate Services
Debbie Worrall	HR Advisor

#### Apologies

Kathryn Ferdinand

### 1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were declared.

### 2 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of Resources Committee held on 14 February 2013 approved as a correct record subject to the following amendment made to page 5

“High Rise Blocks (above 5 storey)” was changed to “High Rise Blocks (5 storey and above)”

### 3 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – FOURTH QUARTER 2012/13

The committee received an update on the management accounts for the fourth quarter 2012/13 including the income and expenditure in relation to both revenue and repairs.

The Council initially agreed to pay the company fees totalling £31.429m for the 2012/13 financial year, consisting of £13.334m for the management fee and £18.095m for the repairs fee. As detailed in the budget report, the proposed budget initially provided a deficit of £609,000 however, following a review of current vacancies and by including some of these in the budget at zero cost we reduced the deficit to £9,000.

The accounts at the end of the fourth quarter 2012/13 show an under spend for the year of £18,000. This is due to salary costs being under spent in some sections where posts have been vacant and not yet filled. The repairs account is under spent for the year by £10,000.

Members raised concerns about the increase in the level of insurance claims and it was agreed to provide more detailed information.

The audit of the Financial Statements will take place at the end of May and beginning of June and the finalised Financial Statements will be brought to the Audit Committee meeting in July for approval.

- RESOLVED – (i) That the management accounts for the fourth quarter of the 2012/13 financial year be noted and a more detailed analysis of insurance claims be circulated.
- (ii) That the committee place on record their thanks for the hard work in producing the excellent outturn for the financial year.

#### **4 SICKNESS ABSENCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

The committee received an update on general HR initiatives and developments for the period April 2012 to March 2013.

The total sickness absence for the period equates to 7.67 days per person compared to 8.30 days last year which is a reduction of 7.6%.

Short term absence for the period was 3.34 days per person and long term absence was 4.34 days. This compares with 4.71 days short term absence and 3.60 days long term absence for the same period last year. This represents a reduction of 29.1% in short term absence. Long term absence has however increased by 17%.

The biggest cause of absence has continued to be stress with 918 days lost compared to 698 last year. It is a concern that the figure has increased by 24%. Of the 918 days of stress related illness, 79% was related to stress in an employee's personal life and 21% was work related. Initiatives that have taken place and measure in place to address this were reported. The company will continue to investigate initiatives that will help it better understand the causes of depression, anxiety and stress, specifically around the impact linked to welfare reform and the current economic climate.

The company has held 44 short term sickness absence review meetings in the period, which resulted in 18 employees being issued with first written cautions.

The company has held 13 long term sickness absence reviews in the period triggered in a response to four or more continuous weeks of absence. The absence management review for long term absence considers an employees health and their future employability with the company.

Nine employees attended an occupational health physician's appointment as a result of absence review meetings.

73 cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)/counselling sessions were supported by the company.

One employee attended physiotherapy sessions supported by the company.

58 employees were referred to occupational health for an initial assessment. 43 employees attended an occupational health review.

Sixteen employees returned to work on phased hours and duties in the period April 2012 to March 2013.

Details of investigation/disciplinary, grievances, bullying and harassment and Whistleblowing during the period were reported.

The company has advertised 22 jobs during the period.

Details of learning and development activity in the period were reported. These included training in mediation, business continuity planning, data protection e-learning, assessments, qualifications, health and safety and ICT.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted and a more detailed report be produced on the impact of stress in employee's personal life.

## **5 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE**

The committee received a summary of equality and diversity work with the organisation for the fourth quarter of the year.

During the period, the company has been working with Mears in reviewing and developing its approach to Asbestos Management.

The revised approach to accidents reporting procedures was implemented during this reporting period. Details of accidents/incidents reported during the quarter were reported.

During the period request were received for asbestos surveys to support a number of areas of work. There were four incidents relating to the accidental disturbance of Asbestos Containing Material.

During the last quarter the SHE Section and Tyne and Wear Fire Service have jointly visited several sheltered housing units to carry out the periodical fire safety audits. A work programme has been developed for the sheltered housing buildings and is due to start in the next reporting period and be completed by April 2014.

The periodical monitoring meetings with Gateshead Council's Local Environmental Services and the company has been re-established.

Through the insurance inspection of lifts there were no relevant actions reported during the period. There were seven entrapments reported. In only one incident the response exceeded the prescribed time and the findings have

been discussed with the lift company and procedures amended to prevent this reoccurrence.

When a construction project commences the Company is required to notify the HSE using an F10. There are presently 17 F10 notifications in place. There are 15 sites started and works are progressing. All working sites have been visited and were found to be working to agreed site rules and regulations.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

## **6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY – UPDATE**

The committee received a summary of equality and diversity work within the organisation for the last quarter of 2012/13 which support its overall goals.

In March 2013, 38 attendees took part in an event called 'Equality and Diversity: It Pays to Know'. This was a joint event between the housing company and Assessment North East, a local organisation specialising in equality and diversity.

During this reporting period, the Involvement and Diversity Manager attended an E&D 'Train the Trainer' session, aimed at providing officers with information and advice to deliver training and awareness on equality issues within individual organisations.

As a result, this method will be used to deliver the customer equality session 'Understanding Differences in People' delivering a cost saving, whilst also providing the opportunity to tailor this training to make it much more directly related to the housing company and the community it serves.

The company continues to collect and update the information held on its customers to ensure it responds appropriately to individual needs such as communicating in the most appropriate way to them.

The Committee received further updates on the company's Community Fund, and progress being made on the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index action plan

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

## **7 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Tuesday 10 September 2013 at 10am in Board Room 2, Keelman House, Fifth Avenue Business Park, Fifth Avenue, Team Valley, Gateshead.

## **8 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.