



The Gateshead Housing Company

Working with Gateshead Council

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

21 November 2013

PRESENT:

Directors

Barbara Dennis (Chair)
Sheila Boutieh
Robert Buckley
Joanne Carr
George Clark
Mick Davison
Pauline Dillon
Paul Foy
Eileen Gill
Helen Hall
John Hamilton
Peter Mole
Joachim Moussouanda 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
Julie McCartney	Head of Neighbourhood Services
Stuart Gibson	Governance and Risk Officer

Apologies

Kathryn Ferdinand

58 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY CHAIR

RESOLVED – That Barbara Dennis and Peter Mole be appointed as Chair and Deputy Chair until the first Board Meeting after the next Annual General Meeting.

59 MINUTES

The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 19 September 2013 were approved as a correct record.

60 MATTERS ARISING

(a) Board Tour

The tour to look at key sites to enable Board Members to familiarise themselves with issues being discussed at the Board/committees has been fixed for Thursday 16 January 2013 after the Board Meeting.

(b) Welfare Reform

There will be an hour long session on welfare reform at the Board Planning Day on 9 December 2013, including an external speaker from Northern Housing Consortium.

(c) TGHC Community Fund

A report on the review of the Community Fund will be presented to the Board Meeting in January 2013.

61 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Board received details of the membership of committees for the next year and the appointment of the chairs to each of the committees.

Due to there being less interest in serving on Audit Committee, some Board Members have agreed to sit on three committees.

It was also agreed that the membership of the other three committees be increased from seven to eight. Three members would still need to be present to be quorate.

RESOLVED – That the committee membership and chairs appointed to the committees for the next year be noted.

62 CODE OF GOVERNANCE

The Board received proposals identified by the Audit Committee on 16 October 2013 to meet the actions identified in the Action Plan following agreement to adopt the National Housing Federation: Excellence in Governance as the Company's Code of Governance.

RESOLVED – That the following proposals be approved: -

- The Chair of the Board be appraised by the Chair of Audit Committee and Chair of Resources Committee, with input from the Managing Director.
- No amendments be made to the Recruitment Policy regarding the number of board members of other housing providers.
- The current application form for the appointment of Independent Directors be reviewed.

- Further investigations be carried out into arrangements around Board Champions within other ALMOs.
- The Protocol for Meetings of the Board and its Committees be deleted.
- The Board receive the minutes of Keelman Homes for information.
- Volunteers to sit on time limited task group to look at the current induction process be sought.
- The updated Code of Conduct for Directors of the Company be approved, subject to an additional paragraph in relation to a tenant directors rights.
- The Action Plan be updated and posted on the Board Members Website.

63 WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The Human Resources Committee approved an updated Whistleblowing Policy at its meeting held on 21 October 2009. The Policy has not been reviewed since then.

A recent Internal Audit review of counter fraud highlighted that the current policy needed updating, particularly in respect of changes introduced as a result of the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013.

The Resources Committee, at its meeting held on 5 November 2013, recommended approval by the Board of the updated Whistleblowing Policy, subject to a few amendments.

RESOLVED – That the updated Whistleblowing Policy be approved.

64 REVIEW OF LEASEHOLD MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Customers and Communities Committee, at its meeting held on 7 November 2013, recommended approval by the Board of a revised Leasehold Management Policy which has been developed in conjunction with leaseholders.

RESOLVED – That the revised Leasehold Management Policy be approved.

65 BOARD MEETINGS 2014

RESOLVED – That the following schedule of Board Meetings in 2014 be approved: -

Thursday 16 January 2014 at 10am
 Thursday 20 March 2014 at 10am
 Thursday 15 May 2014 at 10am
 Thursday 10 July 2014 at 10am
 Thursday 18 September 2014 at 10am
 Thursday 20 November 2014 at 10am

66 MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

The minutes of the following committees were submitted: -

- Audit Committee – 16 October 2013
- Assets, Development and Investment Committee – 17 October 2013
- Resources Committee – 5 November 2013
- Customers and Communities Committee – 7 November 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes be noted, subject to an amendment to the minutes of the Assets, Development and Investment Committee.

67 CO-LOCATION TO THE CIVIC CENTRE

The Board received an update on progress with vacating Keelman House and co-locating to Gateshead Council's Civic Centre.

Formal notice to end the lease on 24 July 2014 was served by the Council's Legal Services on the Company's behalf.

Access to Keelman House has recently been granted to allow a survey to be carried out on behalf of the landlord for future marketing purposes. It is expected that this will inform any schedule of dilapidations. A full schedule of dilapidations will be agreed and then negotiations will commence on receipt of the schedule of dilapidations to come to a commercial deal with the landlord.

If no agreement can be reached on a settlement figure, it may be necessary to carry out re-instatement works to Keelman House. To ensure there is sufficient time to carry out any re-instatement works prior to the break in the lease, a target date to vacate Keelman House has been set for 31 March 2014.

A floor plan has been provided for the space that the Company will be occupying at the Civic Centre which will accommodate all employees currently based at Keelman House. There is also adequate space to include the Rent and Income Team currently based at Wrekenton office who will also be re-located to the Civic Centre.

The allocated space will enable the Company to be accommodated in its own dedicated pavilion, which was important in terms of maintaining its culture and identity.

Employees have been notified that the move is expected to commence in the second week of February, with a provisional 6-week period for the move. Details of which teams will re-locate first have yet to be finalised but the intention would be to move the call centre operations first to ensure that any disruption to customer service is minimised.

There are currently two main areas to resolve in respect of car parking and customer service provision and progress addressing both these issues was reported.

The internal working group will continue to meet to inform the project plan in relation to the move and provide updates to employees on progress against the programme.

There is unlikely to be any financial savings as a result of the move as the cost of rent and service charges will be similar to what is currently being incurred at Keelman House.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

68 PERFORMANCE – SECOND QUARTER 2013/14

The performance results at the end of the second quarter 2013/14 were submitted.

There are currently 47 key performance indicators which are included within the delivery plan and which are monitored and reported to the Board on a quarterly basis.

At the end of the second quarter: -

- 22 indicators traffic lighted green, which shows that the annual target set for these indicators has been achieved. This is up from 20 in the second quarter 2012/13.
- Four indicators are traffic lighted amber, which shows that the target has not been met but performance has improved on the previous year. This is an increase from three at the end of the second quarter 2012/13.
- Seven indicators are traffic lighted red, which shows that the target has not been met and performance has fallen compared to the previous year. This is down from 18 indicators at the end of the second quarter 2012/13.
- 14 indicators are not yet measurable/baseline year, which is up from five at the end of the second quarter 2012/13.

The analysis therefore indicates that at the end of the second quarter, performance relating to 26 out of the 33 measureable performance indicators can be traffic lighted as on target or improving, which relates to 79% of the indicators. This shows a significant improvement from 56% as at the end of the second quarter 2012/13 and the Company will continue to drive further performance improvements during 2013/14.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

69 SERVICE STANDARD PERFORMANCE – SECOND QUARTER 2013/14

The second quarter performance results against the Company's service standards at the end of the second quarter 2013/14 were submitted.

At the end of the second quarter:-

- 31 indicators were traffic lighted green, which shows that the targets have been met. This is up from 29 in the second quarter 2012/13.
- One indicator is traffic lighted amber, which shows that the targets have not been met but performance has improved from the previous year. This matches performance in the second quarter of 2012/13.
- Five indicators were traffic lighted red, which shows that the targets have not been met and performance was worse than in the previous year. This is down from nine as at the second quarter 2012/13.
- 17 indicators were not measurable against a target at the end of quarter 2, which is down from 21 at the second quarter 2012/13.

Overall, performance relating to 32 out of the 37 measurable service standard performance indicators can be traffic lighted as on target or improving, which relates to 86% of our indicators. This is a significant improvement from 76% as at the second quarter 2012/13.

RESOLVED – (i) That the information be noted.

(ii) That future service standard performance reports also include a summary sheet.

70 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

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

- Forward Plan

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

71 FEEDBACK FROM OUTSIDE BODIES AND EVENTS

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

- The agenda for the Board Planning Day on 9 December 2013 was submitted.
- The Core Brief which gives key company information to employees and ways to ask questions and put forward suggestions was submitted.
- Barbara Dennis reported two key issues that were discussed at the last NFA Board Meeting. They are carrying out a detailed review of governance with the new managing agent. They are also preparing for the General Election and producing a manifesto which includes energy efficiency and has identified TGHC as one of the organisations of good practice for the work done at Kibblesworth.

RESOLVED – That the feedback from outside bodies and events be noted.

72 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Board Meeting will be held on Thursday 16 January 2014 at 10am in the Board Room at Keelman House, Fifth Avenue Business Park, Team Valley, Gateshead.

73 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.