



RESOURCES COMMITTEE

18 November 2015

PRESENT:

Directors

John Hamilton (Chair)
 Sheila Bouitieh
 Elizabeth Bird
 George Clark
 Mick Davison
 Tracy Harrison

Advisers

Jon Mallen-Beadle	Managing Director
Neil Bouch	Director of Customers and Communities
Natalie Porthouse	Head of Corporate Services
Jennifer Aston	Support Services Manager
Helen Watson	Involvement Officer
Stuart Gibson	Governance and Risk Officer

Apologies

Robert Buckley
 Kathryn Ferdinand

22 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED – That Tracy Harrison be appointed as Deputy Chair of the committee until the first meeting after the next Annual General Meeting.

23 MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the committee held on 8 September 2015 were approved as a correct record.

24 MATTERS ARISING – HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

- It was confirmed that risk assessments from Crowhall Towers, Tennyson Court and Newbold Court had been complete.
- It was noted that the two water hygiene inspections/treatments had not been completed by Construction Services at Wrekenton Housing Office and West Park because both buildings were closed.

- It was noted that it had not been possible to carry out the 31 outstanding fire alarm tests to multi storey blocks and sheltered house communal areas due to them all being on a bank holiday Monday.

25 COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Following an Internal Audit of Communications in June 2014, it was recommended that a Communications Strategy should be established and maintained to include how the Company aims to communicate with employees, customers and external stakeholders. This should link to the priorities and objectives of the TGHC Five-Year Strategic Plan.

A Communications Strategy has now been developed. It provides an ongoing framework and direction for communications to all audiences of the Company.

It aims to help all employees of the Company to effectively promote all relevant information in relation to Company activity and highlight the excellent work that is undertaken on behalf of all stakeholders.

It will help to ensure that all stakeholders receive the right information, at the right time and in the right way, to meet their diverse needs. This will protect the Company's brand and its good reputation.

In order to develop the Communications Strategy the current position has been considered and potential future opportunities and threats have been identified.

The Communications Strategy will be comprehensively reviewed every three years, with consideration of any significant changes on an annual basis in conjunction with the annual Communications Service Plan. Any changes deemed to be significant will be reported to the TGHC Board for approval as and when they emerge, to ensure that the Communications Strategy remains relevant and fit for purpose.

The committee suggested some additional elements to be included in the Strategy. It was noted that the Strategy was the overarching/fundamental document with a number of other plans underpinning this.

RESOLVED – That the Board be recommended to approve the Communications Strategy 2015-2018, which is attached at Appendix 1 to these minutes, subject to the following comments of the Board being considered: -

- Have regard to the opportunities and threats given that service standards are likely to be impacted upon as a result of the service reductions.
- Given the increasing pressures, recognition of the need to promote and support channel shift for customers – however it was stressed that there could be mixed responses to this from customers.
- Low demand pressures and links to the marketing strategy
- Signposting to financial advice.
- Publications available on pre-tenancy.

26 FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Financial Regulations have been reviewed to ensure that they are reasonable and meet the needs of the Company.

They were found to be fit for purpose with only minor amendments made to ensure they meet current financial practices.

The amended Financial Regulations were submitted.

RESOLVED – That the Board be recommended to approve the amended financial regulations.

27 PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE STANDARDS – QUARTER 2 2015/16

The committee received the Performance Indicators and Service Standards results for the second quarter of 2015/16.

There are currently 12 key Performance Indicators and Service Standards that will be reported to this Committee on a quarterly basis.

At the second quarter: -

- Seven indicators were traffic lighted green, which showed that the annual targets for these indicators had been achieved. This was an increase from four at the same period last year.
- No indicators were traffic lighted amber in 2015/16 and 2014/15. Amber indicators showed that target set had not been met but performance had increased on the previous year.
- No indicators were traffic lighted red. Red indicators show that the target set had not been met and performance had decreased compared to the previous year. This was a decrease from three at the same period last year.
- Five indicators were not yet measurable.

The performance results therefore indicated that at the second quarter, performance relating to seven out of the seven measureable Performance Indicators and Service Standards could be traffic lighted as on target, which related to all the indicators. This was an increase in performance compared to the same period last year, when 57% of indicators were on target or improving.

RESOLVED – That the committee is satisfied with the Performance Indicators and Service Standards results at the second quarter 2015/16.

28 HOUSEMARK BENCHMARKING RESULTS 2014/15

The committee received a report on cost and performance information as detailed in the HouseMark 'Summary of Benchmarking Results 2014/15' report.

A value for money and performance summary was submitted for the main business activities of the organisation.

Cost and performance data was categorised into quartiles.

The committee asked whether it should continue to be a member of this and questioned some of the information in the report.

RESOLVED – That the information be noted.

29 MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS – SECOND QUARTER 2015/16

The committee received an update on the management accounts for the second quarter of the financial year 2015/16.

The Management Accounts Revenue shows a surplus for the second quarter of £238,000. This is due to slippage on vacant posts and overhead budgets where spend will not be realised until later in the year.

The overall position for repairs at the end of the second quarter is an underspend of £649,000. Although the position would suggest that spend is on target, there are a couple of areas of concern. Mears responsive repairs and relets are both over spent, partly due to Mears completing work they received in 2014/15 for which the budget has now transferred to Construction Services. Construction Services budgets are currently underspending partly offsetting the over spend. This area will need to be monitored closely to ensure it comes in on budget by the year end.

The painting programme is currently underspent for both Mears and Construction Services. Due to ongoing negotiations over the contract extension, Construction Services didn't start their painting programme until the end of July 2015. Progress on both delivery streams will be monitored closely over the winter months, as the focus moves to internal schemes, to ensure the programme can be completed by year end.

RESOLVED – That the committee is satisfied with the financial management of the Revenue and Repairs budgets for the second quarter of the 2015/16 financial year.

30 SICKNESS ABSENCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

The committee received an update on general HR initiatives and developments from April to September 2015, including sickness absence and learning and development activity.

The total sickness absence for the period equates to 3.86 days per person, compared to 4.13 days for the same period last year, which is a decrease of 7%.

Short term absence is defined as a period of less than 15 working days in duration and long term absence is greater than 15 days in duration. Short term absence was 1.64 days per person. This compares with 1.74 days for the same period last year, a decrease of 6%. Long term absence was 2.22 days per person. This compares with 2.39 days for the same period last year, a decrease of 7%

The biggest cause of absence was stress with 260 days lost, however this was a significant improvement on the same period last year when 422 days were lost, a decrease of 38%.

Of the 260 days of stress related absence, 178 days were reported as non-work related stress. This equates to 68% as non-work related absence and 32% work related absence.

Of the 260 days lost to stress related absence, 11 employees reported non-work related stress and four employees reported work related stress
During December, two manager briefing sessions will be delivered by Danny Haplin, Occupational Health Lead Counsellor aimed at providing managers with tips and techniques in managing stress positively.

The Company has held 10 short term sickness absence review meetings with nine first written cautions being issued following these meetings. Ten long term absence review meetings were held.

The committee also received details of sickness absence benchmarking, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Absence Management Annual Survey Report 2015, health and wellbeing, work life balance, bullying and harassment, other HR initiative and Developments and learning and development activity.

RESOLVED – That the committee is satisfied with sickness absence and human resources update for the period April to September 2015.

31 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

The committee received an update on the following health and safety activities for the period 1 April to 30 September 2015: -

- Partners Activity
- Accident Reporting
- Asbestos Management
- Fire Safety Management
- Legionella Control
- Fire Alarm Systems and Sprinkler System
- Out of Hours
- Emergency Lighting
- Non domestic gas boilers
- Cyclical Repair and Maintenance
- Lift Maintenance
- Company Construction Related Activities
- Safety Briefing and Alerts Issued by Health and Safety Teams
- Internal Audit of Health and Safety
- Corporate Health and Safety Policies

The Committee asked whether partners were encouraging their staff to make better use of tablet devices to reduce paperwork. It was noted that Construction Services had been spoken to about doing cyclical maintenance through Northgate instead of Total which in turn would reduce the paperwork. A further update would be given to the committee in due course.

RESOLVED – That the committee is satisfied with the health and safety update for her period April to September 2015.

32 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY – UPDATE

The committee received a summary of the following equality and diversity work within the Company in the second quarter of 2015/16: -

- Knowing our Customers
- Training and Guidance
- Single Equality Scheme
- Hate Crime
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Equality
- Young People

The committee was informed that there weren't any plans at the moment through the partnership with Greggs to extend the breakfast clubs outside of term time. It was noted that Churches Together were piloting a scheme.

The committee asked how the Company would be encouraging more people to attend the Talent Match initiative which aimed to get young unemployed people into work or further training. The Company needed to get the message out more by going out into the community. The committee suggested approaching the Youth Council. It was also suggested asking the five young people who attended the session if any of them would talk to the Youth Council.

RESOLVED – That the committee is satisfied with the progress activity relating to equality and diversity carried out in the second quarter of 2015/16.

33 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the committee will be held on Tuesday, 23 February 2016 at 2pm in Room S21 at Gateshead Civic Centre, Regent Street, Gateshead.

34 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 Category 1 of the Company's Access to Information Rules.

35 MINUTES (Category 1)

The minutes of the last meeting of the committee held on 8 September 2015 were approved as a correct record.

36 MATTERS ARISING – SUPPORT INITIATIVES WITHIN THE RENT AND INCOME SERVICE

The additional Employment Adviser to work specifically with council tenants for an initial 12 month period would start early in the New Year.

The additional Advice and Support Officer has been appointed to deal with energy queries.