

## DERBY HOMES LIMITED

### MINUTES OF THE GOVERNANCE SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Thursday 23 September 2010

The meeting started at 12.10 pm

#### Board Members Present:

Bob Osler (Chair), Dennis Rees (arrived at 12.20 pm), Ken Whitehead

#### Officers Present:

Phil Davies, Susan Hill, Jackie Mitchell, Lorraine Watson

#### 10/26 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Paul Bayliss and Margaret Redfern.

#### 10/27 Admission of Late Items

There were no late items.

#### 10/28 Declarations of Interests

The Tenant Board Members declared their interests as tenants (as defined in the Memorandum and Articles of Association) of Derby City Council.

#### 20/29 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2010 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

#### 20/30 Matters Arising

##### Minute 10/22 Training for Committee Members

It was confirmed that all Board Members will be invited to the Governance training in December which will be delivered by Simon Ramshaw of Anthony Collins Solicitors. The Chief Executive added that Derwent Living has invited Board Members to attend their Board meeting on 3 March 2011.

The Chief Executive informed Committee that the Equalities training was very interesting and informative. Audit Committee Development

Programme training which Audit Committee members attended on 14 September was also interesting and interactive.

**Minute 10/23 NHF Excellence in Governance Code for Members  
H - Committees of the Board Terms of Reference: Local Housing  
Boards**

The Chief Executive commented on the good work that has been accomplished on the Code for Members. The Governance Services Manager said that the NHF has recently produced an updated version and a document explaining the changes.

**Delegated Powers**

The Chief Executive informed Committee that the Housing Capital Works Programme 2011/12 report was presented at the last Local Housing Boards but was not sure if it generated any debate. Dennis Rees replied that there was not a lot of discussion at the Local Housing Board North. Ken Whitehead said there was more discussion relating to the Osmaston area at the Local Housing Board South.

**Minute 10/25 Board Improvement Action Plan 2010/11**

With reference to point 2.1, the Chief Executive asked if enough was done for team building for Board Members. He commented that Board Members have their Away Day and meet up before the Board meetings. Ken Whitehead replied that he feels he has enough opportunity to meet other Board Members before meetings start. Dennis Rees added Board Members can get together at the buffet before meetings.

**10/31 Training for Committee Members**

The Governance Services Manager informed Committee that the Governance training in December will be facilitated by Simon Ramshaw, Anthony Collins Solicitors. The Director and Company Secretary added that the training would be based on the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 rather than Derby Homes governance. The Chief Executive informed Committee that there will be a Health and Safety week which Stuart Hufton and Shaun Bennett will be arranging. The Director and Company Secretary added there will be Housing Finance training on 10 November with Steve Partridge.

## **10/32      Review of Board Reports**

The Committee received a report in response to Action 3.6 in the Board Improvement Plan to review the level of detailed information distributed via Board reports. Attached to the report was a schedule showing reports on Part C of the agenda between January and July 2010 and which reports the Board agreed to discuss. The average duration of these meetings was two and half hours. The Governance Services Manager suggested reports under Part C are entered on to CMIS as there had not been a lot of discussion on these reports and it would also reduce the amount of paperwork. The Chair suggested that any questions on Item C1 Draft Minutes of Committees and Local Housing Boards could be raised at Committee Chairs Feedback and any questions from other Part C items, could be raised with the Chair at Chair's Announcements.

The Chief Executive commented that the paperwork would be reduced if the reports are on CMIS. The Director and Company Secretary informed Committee that Board Members should not print off reports at home from CMIS as consumables are expensive and it would be cheaper and faster if photocopied at Derby Homes; Board Members should contact Derby Homes' staff if they require a copy of a report. If Board Members have a problem with their computer they should contact Derby Homes' IT Team.

The Governance Services Manager also informed Committee that timings could be provided on the Board agenda.

### **Agreed**

The Committee agreed to make recommendations to the Board that

1. copies of reports on Part C – For Noting of the Board agenda will not be provided but will be available on CMIS.
2. any questions from Part C, Board Members to raise with the Chair at Chair's Announcements.
3. questions from Item C1 Draft Minutes of Committees and Local Housing Boards be raised at Committee Chairs Feedback.
4. timings be provided on the Board agenda.

## **10/33      Future Meetings and Agenda Items**

The Chief Executive informed Committee that this item would be discussed under Item 9 Review Committee Structures and Delegated Responsibilities.

## **10/34      Review the Format and Role of the Chair's Group**

The Committee received a report regarding Chair's Group meetings held fortnightly as far as possible. The meetings are attended by the Chair, two Vice Chairs, Chief Executive and three Directors, plus other staff if needed. The Chief Executive highlighted how valuable the meetings are.

The Chair and Dennis Rees commented that they liked the idea of inviting guests. The Chief Executive suggested inviting the new Head of Repairs when he starts at the end of September.

The Chief Executive commented on the value of having informal meetings with Councillor Ingall, Cabinet Member. The Chair and Chief Executive suggested inviting Councillor Ingall to separate quarterly meetings.

### **Agreed**

The Committee agreed to

1. continue with the current arrangements
2. take on a stronger role of holding the Executive Team to account on performance
3. Directors' report on their service areas be supplemented by a quarterly report on performance
4. Councillor Ingall, Cabinet Member, be invited to meet Chief Executive and Chair of Derby Homes at separate quarterly meetings
5. invite guests from the Council, partner agencies or housing experts to attend to discuss Derby Homes and their work
6. Head of Repairs to be invited to a future meeting.

## **10/35      Review Committee Structures and Delegated Responsibilities**

The Committee received a report in response to Actions 4.1 and 5 in the Board Improvement Plan.

Committees' delegated responsibilities are set out in the Governance Arrangements and Committee terms of reference. Any changes will be subject to Board approval. The Chief Executive informed Committee of the proposals to be considered by the Board in September to reduce the number of Committee meetings.

The Chief Executive commented that the proposals would reduce the numbers of meetings from 35 to 23. This would reduce staff time in writing the reports, photocopying, Board Members preparation time and cost of buffets, resulting in £50,000 savings a year and equivalent to one post.

Dennis Rees queried the Terms of Reference and membership of the City Wide Housing Committee. The Director and Company Secretary replied that the Terms of Reference will be the same as that for the Local Housing Boards. The Chief Executive added that the membership of the Local Housing Board would be the same for the City Wide Housing Committee. He suggested that officers attend meetings only if they have to present a report.

**Agreed**

The Committee noted the report.

**10/36 Board Improvement Action Plan 2010/11**

The Committee considered the Board Improvement Action Plan 2010/11 which had been delegated to them by the Board in January for implementation.

Ref 1.2 – Review the format and role of the Chairs Group – completed 23 September 2010.

Ref 2.2 – Include Companies Act training as part of the essential induction training process – to be held in December.

Ref 3.6 Review the level of detailed information distributed via Board reports – completed 23 September 2010.

Ref 5 – Review delegated responsibilities in conjunction with the proposed review of committee structures – completed 23 September 2010

**Agreed**

The Committee agreed the Board Improvement Action Plan 2010/11.

**Date of next meeting**

**The date of the next meeting will be agreed at the Annual General Meeting on Thursday 28 October 2010.**

The meeting ended at 1.40 pm.

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CHAIR

Signed as true and accurate record of the meeting held on 23 September 2010.