

# **DERBY HOMES LIMITED**

## **MINUTES OF THE CITY BOARD MEETING**

**Held on Thursday 16 February 2012**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm

### **Board Members Present:**

Paul Bayliss, Win Buchan, Jim Elks, Gary Featherstone, Lynn Gilbey, Tony Holme, Wendy Jessop, John Keith, Harry Margett, Bob Osler, Brian Perry, Janice Platt, Margaret Redfern, Dennis Rees (Chair), Ray Theobald, Bob Troup, Ian Veitch.

### **Officers Present:**

Paul Cole, Maureen Davis, Matt Hands, Jim Joyce, Jackie Mitchell, Tony Muldoon, Maria Murphy, Julie Wren.

### **Observers Present:**

Fiona Walker, Jolanta Szatkowska – prospective City Board Members.

### **Others Present:**

Alex Mclauchlan – Contract Manager, Sodexo.

### **12/01 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Mike Ainsley, Ken Whitehead and Jack Wray.

### **12/02 Admission of Late Items**

Margaret Redfern requested that discussion takes place regarding Derby Homes' policy on the provision of gritting in bad weather.

### **12/03 Declarations of Interests**

The Council Board Members were noted as declaring their interest in matters relating to Derby City Council.

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

## **12/04 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 22 December 2011 were accepted as a true and accurate record with the exception of a correction to the spelling of Tony Holme's name which should be spelt Holme.

## **12/05 Matters Arising**

**Minute 11/132 Matters Arising** – Margaret Redfern is still waiting for a list of properties in the kitchen and bathroom replacement programme. She had requested city wide information but received only information for the Derwent area. The Director of Housing & Customer Service apologised and will make sure this information is sent to her.

**Minute 11/141 Furnished Tenancy Scheme** – The figure provided at the last meeting for the take up of furnished tenancies was corrected from 4,000 to 1,200.

**Minute 11/141 Non Core Activity Reviews - Internal Decoration Scheme** – An action plan for implementation of this non-core activity review will be brought to the next City Board meeting. The Derby Association of Community Partners will be carrying out a Customer Journey for this service.

## **12/06 Questions from members of the public**

There were no questions from members of the public.

## **12/07 Any items from Part B to be discussed**

The City Board agreed to discuss items B1, B4, B7 and B9. All other items were noted but not discussed.

## **12/08 Items from Contractor Partners**

The Maintenance Manager introduced Alex Mclauchlan, Contracts Manager for the proposed new cleaning and grounds maintenance contractor, Sodexo. It is hoped that the contract will be in place and operational by April.

Sodexo will be providing a combined service for grounds maintenance and cleaning. Alex explained how the new contract would operate and gave assurances that communication with Derby Homes and tenants would be given high priority.

The contract will not include tree management. The City Board was advised the Council's policy had recently been reviewed and a report will be brought to the next meeting detailing the arboricultural services Derby Homes receives from the Council and in which area the work has been carried out.

The Chair thanked Alex for attending.

## **12/09 Training for City Board Members**

The Chair informed the City Board Members that they should contact Jackie Mitchell, Governance Services Manager, if they have any requests for training.

## **12/10 Estates Pride Quick Fix Bids**

The City Board received a report on bids for funding from the Quick Fix fund within Estates Pride, in response to known problems, in particular to reduce crime, nuisance and vandalism.

The City Board deferred the funding request for work at Weirfield Road, Allestree, pending further information about the number of Council properties in this road. It was proposed that 50% of the funding would be provided by the Darley Neighbourhood Board but the City Board was concerned that only a very small number of the properties are owned by the Council and therefore the funding should be split proportionately.

### **Agreed**

The City Board approved the following bids:

1. **2 Hanover Square, Mackworth** - Remove hedge and supply and fit 1.8m high and 1.5m high recycled plastic fencing to side boundary.
2. **Parker Street, West End** - Remove existing fencing and supply and fit 1.8m high metal bow top fencing, one lockable double gate, one single gate, one drop curb and recite existing rotary driers.

It was agreed to defer the bid for Weirfield Road subject to further information being brought back to the next meeting.

## **12/11 Review of Estates Pride Quick Fix Allocations**

The City Board received a report asking the City Board to look at the

way the Estates Pride Quick Fix funding is allocated and approved and to consider greater delegation to the Housing Focus Groups (HFGs).

It was proposed the £300K budget for Estates Pride Quick Fix funding be delegated in full to the five HFGs with the flexibility to carry amounts over.

The City Board queried the reason for the proposed change and was advised that the proposal would empower the Group to 'own' the funding and it would be more likely to be more cautious about its spending and consider its options more carefully. It was also noted that staff have been informed that if a bid is not clear or information incomplete, then it will be refused and deferred to the next HFG meeting.

Tenant Board Members have been asked to chair their Housing Focus Groups and this will help to strengthen the relationship between the HFGs and the City Board.

### **Agreed**

The City Board agreed that the £300k budget for Estates Pride Quick Fix funding be delegated in full to the Housing Focus Groups (£60K per HFG) for one year with feedback on effectiveness after this time and subject to the Council's approval.

## **12/12 Capital Repairs – Tenants in Rent Arrears**

The City Board received a report asking for approval on a proposal to defer kitchen and bathroom replacement works for tenants in rent arrears who do not come to an agreement to clear the arrears or maintain agreed arrangements to reduce arrears.

The City Board was advised currently there are 4,500 tenants with arrears. If the proposal is agreed tenants in arrears within the programme for kitchen and bathroom works will be advised the work will be deferred unless a payment arrangement is agreed and maintained for a minimum of 13 consecutive weeks.

Improvement work is discretionary, unlike repairs which is a statutory obligation, within cautionary limits, ie not outside the decent homes programme and landlord obligations. The decision to defer work will be made by a Customer Service Manager. Complaints against a decision to defer work will be reviewed by a Head of Service or more senior officer.

There are a range of initiatives in place to target those tenants in arrears but not included within the programme for replacement works and a report will be brought back on arrears management.

### **Agreed**

The City Board agreed to the proposal to defer kitchen and bathroom replacement works for tenants in rent arrears who do not come to an agreement to clear the arrears or maintain agreed arrangements to reduce arrears.

## **12/13 Late Item**

Margaret Redfern raised a concern on behalf of Councillor Sara Bolton regarding the lack of gritting around sheltered housing schemes in bad weather and the risk of residents falling. She asked if Derby Homes has a policy for dealing with bad weather conditions such as snow and ice and if there is an emergency plan which can be provided to tenants.

Derby Homes has a gritting policy and it is looking to do more. In addition, Caretakers grit areas in order of priority. There is now an agreement in place with Streetpride for Derby Homes to purchase additional resources if necessary. The City Board was informed an article on Derby Homes' bad weather policy will be published in the September edition of Derby Homes News and will also be circulated to all Councillors.

### **Agreed**

The City Board noted the query raised on behalf of Councillor Bolton and the action to be taken.

## **12/14 Directors' Update**

The City Board received a report containing a general overview and update on

- New Build
- Asset Management
- Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP)
- Repairs Team Update
- Under-Occupation
- Family Intervention Project
- Relocation of the DACP/Resident Involvement Team,

Paul Bayliss requested information on the implication for tenants regarding the bedroom tax/under-occupation proposals under the new Universal Credit and the Council's proposals for the Family Intervention Project under the Government's Troubled Families agenda. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

**Agreed**

The City Board noted the report and that reports will be provided at the next meeting as requested.

**12/15 Performance Monitoring Quarter 3 2011/12**

The City Board received a report detailing Quarter 3 performance against targets contained in the Monthly Indicator Link.

**Agreed**

The report was noted but not discussed.

**12/16 Equalities Customer Profile – Quarter 3 2011/12**

The City Board received a report detailing equalities monitoring and information focussing on customer profile data in relation to Ethnicity, Gender, Age, Disability, Sexual Orientation and Religion during quarter 3.

**Agreed**

The report was noted but not discussed.

**12/17 Complaints and Satisfaction Report Quarter 3 – 2011/12**

The City Board received a report detailing analysis of complaints received between 1 October and 31 December 2011.

Margaret Redfern referred to the graph containing complaint cases for 2011/12 and asked how the statistics are broken down and the length of time taken to resolve. The Director of Housing and Customer Service advised that she would ask the Performance Team to provide her with the information. This information will be included in future reports.

**Agreed**

The City Board noted the information detailed in Appendix 1

Complaints and Satisfaction report.

**12/18 Performance Monitoring – Local Offers Quarter 3 2011**

The City Board received a report detailing Quarter 3 performance against the Local Offers set by the Tenants and Leaseholders of Derby Homes.

**Agreed**

The report was noted but not discussed.

**12/19 Repairs Update**

The City Board received a report containing an update on recent progress and developments within the Repairs Team.

**Agreed**

The report was noted but not discussed.

**12/20 Feedback on Benchmarking Peer Review Exercise**

The City Board received a report detailing the outcomes and action plan following the Estate Services Peer Review 2011.

Tony Holme commented on the results showing Nottingham City Homes scoring highest in all areas. He asked if there were any lessons to be learnt. The Director of Housing and Customer Service replied that benchmarking took place on service areas across the organisation and Derby Homes will look at all the findings.

**Agreed**

The City Board noted the report.

**12/21 Derby Homes Safeguarding Audit**

The Derby Homes Safeguarding Audit Policy was audited in September 2011 by the Council's Internal Audit section. The City Board received a report detailing actions taken following the Audit report recommendations.

**Agreed**

The report was noted but not discussed.

**12/22 Minutes of the Derby Homes Board Meeting held on 19 January 2012 (Draft)**

Tony Holme queried why the City Board is provided with a copy of the minutes of the Board meeting before Board members have seen them. He also raised a concern that it contained confidential information. The Governance Services Manager advised the minutes are a draft version only and have been edited removing any confidential information.

**Agreed**

The City Board noted the report.

**12/23 Any other business**

The Chair informed the City Board of a Casino Night being held in aid of the Derbyshire Children's Holiday Centre. This will take place on Friday 18 May at the Rolls Royce Club. Tickets are available from Terry Willis, Repairs Manager, telephone 01332 888507.

**Date of next meeting**

**The next meeting will be held on Thursday 19 April at 6.00 pm at Cardinal Square.**

The meeting ended at 7.45 pm.

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CHAIR

Signed as true and accurate record of the meeting held on 16 February 2012.