

## **DERBY HOMES LIMITED**

### **MINUTES OF THE OPERATIONAL BOARD MEETING**

**Held on Thursday 8 June 2023**

### **ITEM 5**

The meeting started at 6.00 pm

#### **Operational Board Members present:**

Bob MacDonald, Chair  
Mike Ainsley  
Councillor Lucy Care  
Tony Holme  
Jsan Shepherd

#### **Officers present:**

Steve Bayliss, Head of Repairs  
Chloe Gaskell, Governance Officer  
Jane Haywood, Governance Manager  
Richard Holman, Estate Maintenance Manager  
James Joyce, Head of Housing Options and Homelessness  
Joshua Knapman, Customer Communications Officer  
Clare Mehrbani, Director of Housing Services  
Helen Samuel, Head of Finance and Income  
Carl Tring-Willis, Head of Housing Management

#### **Others present:**

Sarah Oliffe, Corporate Performance Leader, Derby City Council

#### **23/27 Apologies**

Alan Martin, Board Member  
Maria Murphy, Managing Director

#### **23/28 Admission of late items**

The Operational Board Chair confirmed that there were no late items.

#### **23/29 Declarations of interests**

None relating to this meeting.

#### **23/30 Chair's Announcements**

The Chair reminded the Operational Board to inform the Governance team of their attendance to meetings in plenty of time.

The Chair confirmed that the Capital Works section of the Service Update has been deferred to the next meeting due to staffing issues. This was confirmed by the Head of Housing Management, who assured the Operational Board that the agenda will increase moving forward.

The Chair confirmed that Derby Homes has been successful with the bid for funding through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, to help complete the external insulation work to the cast iron homes.

The Chair noted that Derby Homes hosted the Volunteer Awards, which they attended, and explained that the ceremony went well.

The Chair confirmed that an update on Grounds Maintenance will go to the next meeting.

#### **23/31 Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2023 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

#### **23/32 Matters Arising**

The Operational Board queried the status of the Youth Alliance Grant that was approved at the previous meeting. The Governance Services team confirmed that all relevant documents had been signed to allow the grant to move forward.

The Head of Housing Management confirmed that the Damp and Mould Policy is due to go out to consultation and will go to the Main Board in July.

The Chair confirmed that there were no further updates on Grounds Maintenance.

#### **23/33 Action Monitoring Status**

The Operational Board noted the Action Monitoring Status

The Corporate Performance Leader updated the Operational Board on the Attendance Management Working Group, and that further action will be taken on Monday 12 June.

The Head of Finance and Income confirmed that budgeting skills are included in the strategy. The Operational Board queried whether better terminology

could be used, to confirm the difference between budgeting and spending. This response was noted.

The Head of Finance and Income confirmed that contents insurance is based on flood risks, and that Council based insurance is no longer available. Tenants are advised to seek their own arrangements.

The Operational Board queried whether tenants are aware if their property is a flood risk. The Head of Housing Management confirmed that you can find this data online, and that insurance companies hold this data also.

The Head of Repairs confirmed that the Company Solicitor will have the policy overview for the Damp and Mould policy, and that the company, as a whole, is involved in creating a process for implementing this moving forward. A Damp and Mould technical officer has been employed.

The Chair confirmed that the Grounds Maintenance update will be deferred to the next meeting.

#### **23/34 Questions from the Public**

There were no questions from the public

#### **23/35 Performance Management 2022/23 Quarter Four**

The Operational Board considered the report of the Finance Director, which presented a summary of performance for quarter four and year-end 2022/23, from key performance measures reported to Derby City Council (DCC) (level 2 KPI's).

The Corporate Performance Leader confirmed that the year-end targets that met/exceeded target have actually increased to 22 out of 32.

The Operational Board queried if there was any feedback from customers that could be shared. The Head of Repairs confirmed that post inspections on all properties will continue as these decreased complaints from customers. They also confirmed that there are ongoing investigations into customer satisfaction.

The Head of Housing Management noted that there is a reduction in turnover of stock which could be affecting the percentages shown.

The Operational Board queried whether certain minor circumstances are affecting customer satisfaction levels, and if the questions being asked could be tailored to discover this. The Head of Housing Management confirmed this could be a possibility.

The Head of Housing Options confirmed that the empty homes team are consistently working with customers to increase their satisfaction.

The Operational Board queried if the lettable standard form had been updated. The Head of Repairs confirmed that this has been updated recently.

The Operational Board queried if there has been a result regarding the situation with the Ombudsman, and if this could be included in the report in the future. The Corporate Performance Leader noted this.

The Director of Housing Services confirmed that one of the Ombudsman situations was a Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) case and therefore is treated differently. The LGO confirmed that Derby Homes should have considered the subject as homeless sooner, due to certain factors.

The Director of Housing Services confirmed that the second feedback received from the Ombudsman was regarding checking contact details with customers. The Ombudsman recommended that Derby Homes should routinely check customers contact details and preferred method of contact. The Director of Housing Services confirmed that Derby Homes will work with its resources to implement this.

The Director of Housing Services queried if there should be a standing Ombudsman agenda item for any updates. The Operational Board agreed.

The Director of Housing Services confirmed that the Ombudsman reports will be distributed to the Operational Board.

The Head of Repairs confirmed that if there are any queries regarding the new build statistics, the Operational Board could either query these with him, or an extensive update will go to the next meeting.

The Corporate Performance Leader confirmed that Performance Management statistics for the new Quarter are currently being reviewed by the Senior Management Team

The Operational Board queried whether 'increasing customer expectations' is inappropriate language to use in the second appendix, and if this could be changed. The Corporate Performance Leader noted this and confirmed that the commentary will be reviewed

The Operational Board queried if the language used in the second appendix could be altered to include Derby Homes as a whole. The Head of Repairs noted this.

The Operational Board commented that the figures in the second appendix appeared confusing and potentially incorrect. The Director of Housing Services

confirmed that there are not more presentations, due to continued work with private landlords.

The Operational Board commented regarding customers who are placed long-term in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, and if there is potential to introduce a temporary modular build solution. The Chair confirmed that this could be discussed. The Head of Housing Options confirmed that possible solutions are being explored, including looking at English Church land and working with the YMCA. The Director of Housing Services reiterated that a housing demand profile is being built to explore problems and solutions. They also confirmed that modular builds are an issue due to value for money and appropriate locations. The Head of Housing Options confirmed that Derby Homes are also working with South Derbyshire District Council to discuss using land and properties that SDDC have acquired for the Homefinder system.

The Operational Board queried the figures again in the second appendix. The Head of Finance and Income confirmed that there has been a decrease.

*The Corporate Performance Leader and the Head of Finance and Income left the meeting at 6:59pm*

### **Agreed**

The Operational Board discussed and noted the 2022/23 quarter four and year-end performance trends.

The Operational Board agreed that there should be a standing agenda item for any Ombudsman complaints and feedback.

### **23/36 Supplementary Questions**

There were no Supplementary Questions

### **23/37 Operational Board Forward Plan**

The Operational Board considered the forward plan of agenda items for the period March to December 2023.

The Chair queried if there could be a key to confirm initials on the Forward Plan. The Operational Board agreed.

The Director of Housing Services queried the format of the forward plan and bringing forward triennial policies. They suggested bringing forward tenant satisfaction strategies and procedures. The Chair welcomed this. The Governance Manager confirmed that the policies register is being reviewed by the Governance team currently and will be reviewed by SMT

## **Agreed**

The Operational Board noted the forward plan of agenda items.

### **23/38 Common Rooms and Community Space Policy**

The Operational Board considered the report of the Head of Housing Management, which outlined the objectives and benefits of the common rooms and community spaces and provided the information customers need to be aware of prior to a booking taking place.

The Chair commented that, regarding the section for fob returns, if there could be a set time scale for fob returns. The Operational Board also queried if there could be a deposit for fobs. The Head of Housing Management confirmed that unreturned fobs are cancelled, and therefore a deposit is not necessary. They noted the suggestion for implementing time scales. The Chair also confirmed that 'reasonable time' should be defined. The Head of Housing Management noted this. They also confirmed it may be difficult to enforce a time frame for fob return.

The Head of Housing Management confirmed that the main issues the community spaces were facing, including fire safety and storage use by users, have been addressed in the policy.

The Operational Board passed on their thanks to the Customer Engagement and Community Development Manager, (not present), for the EIA. The Head of Housing Management confirmed, and explained that this has been successful.

The Operational Board queried the wording under the 'Charging Structure' section, and that it is potentially challenging. They suggested changing the language from 'service charging' to 'hiring charging'. The Head of Housing Management noted this

The Operational Board queried the priority booking system, and at what point the tenant has priority over the space. The Head of Housing Management confirmed that there is potential to discuss and negotiate with regular users.

The Operational Board queried if television licenses are necessary for the spaces, as music licenses are. The Head of Housing Management confirmed that there are no TV's in the spaces, however the Operational Board argued that individuals may watch TV by their own means in the buildings. The Operational Board suggested that users should be advised to not watch TV in these spaces to avoid a potential issue. The suggestions were noted.

The Operational Board queried public liability insurance when hiring spaces. The Head of Housing Management confirmed that certain, but not all, groups will have individual constitutions, and that these will be safeguarded.

The Operational Board queried the enforcement of not consuming alcohol on any of the premises. The Head of Housing Management confirmed that the enforcement would be dependent on the scale of consumption.

**Agreed**

The Operational Board approved the updated policy.

**23/39 Part B Questions**

The Operational Board considered the Part B responses to questions.

**Agreed**

The Operational Board noted the Part B responses to questions.

**23/40 Service Update**

The Operational Board noted a joint report prepared by Heads of Service to give a general overview and update on current issues within service areas.

The Chair asked the Board what they would like to see in the Service Update. The Board confirmed that their queries regarding the Housing Crisis had been addressed previously in the meeting.

*The Customer Communications Officer left the meeting at 7:27pm*

The Operational Board confirmed that the Service Update is an interesting report and is useful as an update from Heads of Services.

The Head of Housing Management queried whether the content of the report is satisfactory, and whether the Operational Board would like the opportunity to discuss and query the Service Update, as opposed to only noting it. The Operational Board agreed. The Operational Board commented that this should be an open discussion within the meeting.

The Operational Board queried if it was possible to summarise homelessness statistics into one report instead of crossing against multiple reports. The Head of Housing Options noted this suggestion.

The Operational Board queried the extent of jargon used in the report, and if this could be reduced. The suggestion was noted.

**23/41 Estate and Flat Inspections**

The Operational Board noted the report of the Head of Housing Management which gave detail of the number of cases, by type, commonly arising from flat and estate inspections for the period 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.

**23/42 Homelessness Report Quarter Four**

The Operational Board noted Homelessness Report which gave details on:

- Homelessness Approaches
- Homelessness cases resolved under Prevention and Relief Duty
- Homelessness Acceptances

**23/43 Compliments and Complaints Quarter Four and for the Year 2022/23**

The Operational Board noted the Compliments and Complaints report, which provided a detailed analysis of complaints received between 1 January and 31 March 2023, (Q4), and for the year 2022/23 as a whole.

**23/44 Localised Customer Priorities Quarter Four**

The Operational Board noted the Localised Customer Priorities Report which gave an update on the progress being made in the new approach to Derby Homes Customer Priorities, embracing the values and principles of 'Better Together'.

**23/45 Customer Survey Report Quarter Four**

The Operational Board noted the Customer Survey Report, which provided a detailed analysis of the satisfaction results from the fourth quarter of the Customer Survey 2022/23.

**23/46 ASB Quarter 3 Report**

The Operational Board noted the ASB report which outlined key statistics for Derby Homes ASB service for the fourth Quarter of 2022/23.

**23/47 Homefinder**

The Operational Board noted the Homefinder report which provided information on Derby Homefinder for the period April 2022 to December 2022.

**23/48 Customer Engagement and Community Development (CECD) Report**

The Operational Board noted the CECD report, which updated them on the last 6 months of progress for the Customer Engagement Programme and the Customer Communications Programme; it covered the periods of Q3 and Q4 of 2022/23.

**23/49 Operational Board Members Attendance**

The Operational Board noted Operational Board Members attendance.

**23/50 Escalations to Main Board**

There were no escalations to Main Board

**23/51 AOB**

The Estate Maintenance Manager provided an update on the Grounds Maintenance project. They confirmed that there are 2 working teams for addressing grass cutting on the north and south side of the city. They confirmed that, compared to last year, there is an increase due to starting earlier in the year and multiple May Bank Holidays.

The Estate Maintenance Manager confirmed that the team are aware that starting earlier means there is a decrease in attention to shrubbery, and this is being addressed.

The Operational Board queried the retention of staff and whether this will cause issues with maintaining the grounds maintenance plans. The Estate Maintenance Manager confirmed that lost positions are being recruited, and that sickness levels are also being addressed.

The Operational Board queried if the grounds maintenance plans were working to budget. The Estate Maintenance Manager confirmed that the team are within the budget.

**Date of next meeting – 7 September 2023 6:00pm**

The meeting ended at 7:43 pm

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CHAIR