

DERBY HOMES LIMITED

MINUTES OF THE CITY BOARD MEETING

Held on Thursday 20 June 2013

The meeting started at 6.00 pm

Board Members Present:

Mike Ainsley, Susan Boon, Jim Elks, Tony Holme, Wendy Jessop, Bob MacDonald, Harry Margett, Brian Perry, Janice Platt, Margaret Redfern, Dennis Rees (Chair), Peter Simpson, Ian Veitch, Fiona Walker, Michael Waplington

Officers Present:

Shaun Bennett, Director of Investment and Regeneration
Paul Cole, Communications and Marketing Officer
Mark Crown, Housing Project and Research Officer
Mary Holmes, Customer Services Manager
Clare Mehrbani, Head of Housing Management
Maria Murphy, Acting Chief Executive
Richard Platt, Resident Involvement Administration Officer
Julie Wren, Directors' Secretary

Observers Present:

Keith Merry, Tenant Panel Member
Anthony Slater, Chairman of OSCAR
Gary Woolley, OSCAR Member

13/49 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Bob Osler and Jolanta Szatkowska

13/50 Admission of Late Items

There were none.

13/51 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.

13/52 Update on Derby Homes Review

A report was taken to the Council Cabinet meeting on 15 May on the future arrangements for Council Housing. A link to the report will be sent to City Board members.

At the Derby Homes Board meeting held on 30 May discussion took place on the Cabinet's decision. A Board Away Day has now been planned for Saturday 29 June to look at how the Board can implement the Council's proposals put forward.

Maria Murphy assured the City Board members that the proposals put forward on the future of Derby Homes are very positive. She has no concerns around the future of Derby Homes and the level of service tenants will receive.

13/53 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 18 April 2013 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

13/54 Matters Arising

Minute 13/36 Housing and Leaseholder Focus Groups – the gates at the bungalows on Oakleigh Avenue have now been adjusted and working well.

Minute 13/39 Tenant Panel Review – Energy saving packs are being put together. The Chair asked if the Tenant Panel could have a look at a pack before they are handed out.

Minute 13/43 Repairs Service Update – Tony Holme reported that Matt Hands, Head of Investment, had attended a Leaseholder Focus Group. He had advised that there is currently no statutory requirement for the carrying out of gas servicing for leaseholders who live in their own flat. It is only a requirement if the leaseholder is a landlord and subletting the flat to their own tenant. A small proportion of newer leases do contain a lease obligation to have their gas serviced every year, however this is not statutory and so not open to prosecution.

Minute 13/45 Rent Arrears and Welfare Reform – the subject of reclassification of properties has been discussed by the Labour Group

and they have said they do not propose to go down this route. Some authorities, such as Nottingham, have taken this line. The Minister for Welfare Reform has issued a warning to authorities doing this that their Housing Benefit subsidy will be reduced accordingly.

13/55 Questions from members of the public

There was none.

13/56 Any items from Part B to be discussed

There was none.

Tony Holme asked that the Repairs Teams be congratulated on the excellent statistics achieved. The Chair commented that he would like to scrutinise these figures as he is still receiving complaints from tenants about the service.

A request was made that Sodexo attends the next meeting to respond to complaints raised on the service they provide. Shaun Bennett asked if these issues could be sent to him before the next meeting.

13/57 Items for representatives from Contractor Partners

There were no representatives present.

13/58 Housing and Leaseholder Focus Groups' and Equality Groups Items and Feedback from HFG Facilitators

The City Board received a report with details of Customer Service Management cases/issues raised at Housing Focus Groups (HFGs), Derby Leaseholder Focus Group (LFG) and the Equality Groups.

The HFG facilitators reported that meetings had been positive although some were poorly attended. A question was raised on the validity of attending the meetings as issues raised are not dealt with. Maria Murphy advised that there is half an hour prior to the meetings for tenants and leaseholders to flag up with staff any issues. She added that perhaps this needs to be publicised more.

Ian Veitch referred to the 6.00 pm start time for the HFG meetings which is when most people sit down to eat. He also commented that the location of meetings makes it difficult for people to attend, especially if relying on public transport. The Chair advised that this will all be looked at as part of the review of Resident Involvement.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/59 Training Update

The City Board received a report on the training available for City Board Members. However with the current review of Housing Services taking place it has been decided to postpone the planned Housing Management and Performance training sessions.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/60 Raising the Profile of the City Board

The City Board received a report containing proposals for the promotion of City Board members in their communities.

Proposals put forward include:

- Issue members with custom City Board Member referral cards
- Review the information on the Derby Homes' website to give more detail, highlight the work of the City Board and feature members' photographs with brief personal profiles
- Attendance of City Board members at HFG's. The members can then provide feedback from City Board meetings to the HFG and vice-versa.

A further suggestion is to hold a City Board surgery between 5.00 – 6.00 pm prior to the meeting to give members opportunity to raise individual cases.

Concerns were raised on the possibility of putting too much responsibility on City Board members. There is also a risk that we create another tier alongside Derby Homes' staff. Another issue raised was the possibility of people living in the area finding out the addresses of City Board members and approaching them or other family members.

Maria Murphy said she was in favour of the referral card however this item has opened a bigger conversation on the role of the City Board. She will sit down with Clare Mehrbani to discuss this further. The Board away day on 29 June will also look at further empowering the City Board.

Agreed

The City Board agreed to the proposals as outlined in Section 3 of the report.

13/61 Tenants Rewards Scheme

The City Board received a report containing proposals for a revised Tenants Rewards programme.

Michael Waplington said he did not agree to the criteria of using the dashboard and that tenants with 'no proven ASB in the last 2 years' could qualify as many cases are raised but cannot always be proven. Maria Murphy explained that tenants who use the dashboard save Derby Homes a lot of money which means the resources we have are used more effectively.

Comments made that tenants who are in arrears should not qualify as this will in effect mean we are paying off their arrears. Although it was noted that due to the under-occupation charge, some tenants are in arrears that never have been before, this cannot be distinguished from other arrears.

Maria Murphy proposed that City Board members agree to all proposals put forward apart from the eligibility of tenants in arrears. A vote was taken resulting in 13 in favour and 2 against.

Agreed

The City Board:

1. Agreed to the proposals in section 3.5 and 3.6 for a revised Tenant Rewards programme with the exception of the eligibility criteria for tenants in arrears.
2. Agreed that further consideration be given to the use of the balance of funding as a result of saving £23,000.

13/62 East Midlands Credit Union Consortium (EMCU)

In the absence of Derek Doran, Programme Manager for the East Midlands Credit Union Consortium, Mark Crown provided the City Board with a presentation on the EMCU.

Work has taken place with Erewash who are part of a consortium which is funded by RSL's. 30 social landlords have put a total of

£171K into the pot. Out of this Derby Homes has been given £13,500. For each tenant there is a cost of £10 joining fee which Derby Homes pays and £9 per year for collection of rent.

There are approximately 8,000 people classed as high risk groups who will be offered a rent payment account. These are broken into 4 groups which are:

- New tenants
- Tenants affected by the bedroom tax
- Those who do not pay by direct debit or any other bank account and are not in arrears
- Those in arrears who do not have direct debit

The benefit of this account is the rent gets paid each month therefore securing the tenancy. Also the tenant cannot go overdrawn.

A total of 33 staff have been trained to work on this. Peter Simpson asked if this was something City Board members could be involved with. Mark Crown said that tenants can become volunteers but they would need proper training first.

The City Board members thanked Mark Crown for the presentation.

13/63 Directors' Update

The City Board received an update report providing a general overview and update on current issues. The update included

- New Build
- Asset Management/Planned Maintenance
- Energy Efficiency
- Repairs Team Update
- Nomination for National Federation of ALMO's Award
- New Appointments
- Community Initiatives

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/64 Repairs Service Update

The City Board received an update on progress and developments the Repairs Team are continuing to make.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/65 Estates Pride Quick Fix Bids

The City Board received a report containing an update on Quick Fix bids which have been approved by Housing Focus Groups.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/66 Rent Arrears and Welfare Reform – Update

The City Board received a report giving details on:

- The year-end position on rent arrears
- Current performance
- The initial impact of welfare reform – specifically the under occupation charge.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/67 Performance Monitoring – Year End

The City Board received a report detailing quarter 4 performance against targets reported to Derby City Council.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/68 Equalities Monitoring – Year End

The City Board received a report presenting a demographic picture of Derby City and equalities performance information for 2012/13 compared to previous years.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/69 Local Offers – Year End

The City Board received a report detailing quarter 4 performance against the Local Offers set by the Tenants and Leaseholders of Derby Homes.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/70 Complaints and Satisfaction – Year End

The City Board received a report providing detailed analysis of complaints received between 1 January and 31 March 2013.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/71 Tenant Panel Reviews 2013/14

The City Board received a report detailing the proposed reviews the Tenant Panel will be undertaking during 2013/14.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/72 Direct Debit Pilot

The City Board received a report containing an update on tenants who have access to bank accounts which facilitate direct debits and who would be able to pay by this method when migrated onto Universal Credit.

Agreed

The City Board noted the report.

13/73 Draft Minutes of Derby Homes Board meeting held on 30 May 2013

The City Board noted the draft minutes of the Derby Homes Board held on 30 May 2013.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 22 August at 6.00 pm at London Road.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm.

.....

CHAIR

Signed as true and accurate record of the meeting held on 20 June 2013.

DERBY HOMES LIMITED

MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES, REMUNERATION & REGENERATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Thursday 11 July 2013

The meeting started at 6.00 pm

Board Members Present:

Mike Ainsley, Tony Holme, Iain MacDonald (Chair), Mark Menzies, Dennis Rees, Roy Webb

Officers Present:

Shaun Bennett, Director of Investment & Regeneration
Tony Billingham,
Julie Eyre, Performance Manager
Christine Hill, Personnel Manager
Michael Kirk, Head of Finance
Jackie Mitchell, Governance Services Manager
Maria Murphy, Acting Chief Executive

13/37 Apologies

Apologies were received from Bob Osler, Margaret Redfern, David Enticott

13/38 Admission of Late Items

The Chair admitted a late item regarding the Chief Executive vacancy.

13/39 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.

13/40 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 25 April 2013 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

13/41 Matters and actions arising

Minute 12/34 Possible Purchase of Poets Corner

The Committee received an update on the possible purchase of Poets Corner.

Minute 13/14 Derby Homes Draft Operating Budget

The Chief Executive advised that the discussion regarding funding for the YMCA and other support services for young people, as part of the Young People's Strategy, did not take place at the Board Away Day due to discussions regarding the Review. She will, therefore arrange a separate meeting for Board and City Board Members to discuss this.

Minute 13/27 Personnel Quarterly Update

The Chief Executive confirmed the transfer of the Community Watch Patrol to the Council took place on 1 July.

Minute 13/28 External Management Report

The Committee received an update on external management.

13/42 Training Update

The Committee was advised the Chair's Group has agreed to suspend training until after the review has been implemented. Therefore courses arranged for Housing Management on 18 July and Performance & Risk on 11 September have been postponed.

13/43 Confidential Business

The Committee agreed, under Part IV of the Derby Homes Governance Arrangements, members of the public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following items on grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of confidential information as defined in Standing Order 20.2 (b, g and h).

13/44 Chief Executive Vacancy - Late Report

With the exception of the Personnel Manager and Governance Services Manager, all staff left the room for the discussion of this item.

The Committee considered a report on the salary and change of job title for the Chief Executive Officer.

Agreed

The Committee agreed

1. a salary for the post Chief Executive Officer
2. to change the Chief Executive job title.

The staff returned to the meeting at this point.

13/45 Personnel Report – Quarterly Update April – June

The Committee considered a report on the key activities relating to the employment and management of employees at Derby Homes.

Agreed

The Committee noted the report.

13/46 Medium Term Finance Strategy

The Committee considered a report containing the Medium Term Finance Strategy for Derby Homes.

Agreed

The Committee recommended the strategy to the Board for approval.

13/47 Regeneration Update

The Committee considered a report detailing the ongoing progress of the range of business activities in development. It highlighted the current situation in regard to funding, initiatives Derby Homes is driving forward to deliver new homes and and provided an update on the Osmaston Vision Programme.

Agreed

The Committee noted the report.

13/48 External Management Report

The Committee considered a report detailing performance against management agreements and service level agreements of Derby Homes' management of external properties, as at 31 March 2013.

Agreed

The Committee noted the report.

End of confidential business

13/49 To agree any items from Part C to be discussed

Agreed

The Committee did not wish to discuss any items from Part C.

13/50 Draft Annual Report and Financial Statements 2012-13

The Committee considered the draft annual report and financial statements for Derby Homes for the year ended 31 March 2013. They also received a report explaining the changes made to the accounts since the period 10 forecast out-turn were e-mailed to members of the Resources, Remuneration & Regeneration Committee in March 2013.

The External Auditor has reported a clean audit with no material issues identified.

The Committee was advised that actuarial reviews of the pension scheme are carried out every 3 years, a review was not done this year.

The Committee was assured that the Council, in their letter of representation, underwrites the pension scheme deficit. The figure, currently based on a final salary scheme, is expected to reduce in 2014/15 when this scheme ends and a revised scheme based on career average earnings along with increased pension contributions from both employers and employees should also bring down the overall liability to a lower level.

Agreed

The Committee

1. recommended the Board accepts the draft annual report and financial statements, at the meeting of 25 July 2013, as a true and fair view of the Company's financial affairs as at 31 March 2013 as a going concern
2. noted the explanation of the changes made to the accounts since the forecast out-turn was e-mailed to members of the Resources, Remuneration and Regeneration Committee in March 2013
3. recommended the Board authorises the Chair and Company Secretary to sign the accounts at the Board meeting on 25 July 2013.

4. recommended the Board authorises the Chair, Chief Executive and Director & Company Secretary to sign a letter of representation requested by BDO (LLP) Ltd at the Board meeting on 25 July 2013.

13/51 Derby Homes Management Accounts Period 2

The Committee considered a report tabling the 2013/14 management accounts for Derby Homes as at May 2013. The report concentrated on key variances in actual income and expenditure at May 2013 and also provided an overall forecast year end position.

The year end forecast is for an operating surplus, prior to use of reserves of £804,000, split across Management Fee £622,000 and Maintenance £182,000. This is approximately 2.5% of turnover. A number of projects funded from reserves totalling £1.95m are planned to be undertaken this year, meaning that the year end forecast is an overall loss of £1.144m.

Roy Webb asked whether the Public Buildings contract is on the Risk Register as the number of public buildings will reduce over the next 18 months. Maria Murphy said she thought it was on the operational register and undertook to check this.

Agreed

The Committee noted the report and the current estimated forecast for 2013/14.

13/52 Risk Strategy & Policy Framework Review

The Board received a report reviewing the Risk Strategy and Policy Framework.

The Risk Strategy, Policy and Framework documents currently in use were approved in May 2010. All three were due for review in May 2013. An internal audit in September 2012 identified the need to update the documents to incorporate the HRA risks and the associated scoring methodology.

Audit Committee considered the revised documents at their meeting on 23 January 2013 and finalised their comments at the 15 April 2013 meeting, their comments and recommendations were incorporated in the documents attached to the report.

Resources, Remuneration & Regeneration Committee's terms of reference include a role to keep under review the company's risk management frameworks.

Agreed

The Committee recommended the Risk Strategy, Policy and Framework to the Board for approval.

13/53 Value for Money Strategy

The Committee received a report reviewing the Value for Money strategy. Some significant amendments were proposed and these were explained in the report.

Agreed

The Committee approved the Value for Money Strategy.

13/54 Annual Review of Partnership Register

The Board received a report on the recent review of the Derby Homes Partnership Register.

The Partnership Register is a means by which Derby Homes officially lists the wide range of other organisations it works with in the delivery of a modern housing service on behalf of Derby City Council.

Mike Ainsley asked the Register is a live document, how will it be reported in future? Maria Murphy suggested that the selection of partnerships be discussed at the Value for Money/ Building on Excellence meeting with an annual report to the Board on outcomes.

The Board commended Mark Crown on an excellent piece of work.

Agreed

The Committee recommended to the Board that

1. The content of the Partnership Register is noted and that the suggestions contained within it pertaining to the future management of partnerships by Derby Homes are developed and implemented.
2. Line managers read the Partnership Register and engage with their staff about their work, ensuring that risks, health and safety issues, adequate support and regular review are effectively managed in order to produce the desired outcomes in line with our strategic aims.
3. The Partnership Register is turned into a live database that is managed by the staff or management in the partnership rather like the Local Offers and Business plan databases.

4. The Register process is modified to give more information, such as costings for staff time and labour as well as financial budgets.

13/55 Performance Monitoring

The Committee received a report detailing performance in the areas of rent arrears, invoices and staffing for Quarter 4.

Agreed

The Committee noted the report.

13/56 Professional and Consultancy Fees 2012/13

The Committee received a report which summarised the expenditure on legal, professional and consultancy services during 2012/13. It also explained the process for the selection of consultants.

Agreed

The Committee noted the report.

13/57 Procurement Waivers

The Committee received a report presenting information relating to the requests to waive Derby Homes Procurement Standing Orders.

Agreed

The Committee noted the report.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 12 November 2013 at 6.00 pm at London Road Training Room.

The meeting ended at 8.25 pm.

.....

CHAIR

Signed as true and accurate record of the meeting held on 11 July 2013.

