

# **DERBY HOMES LIMITED**

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Held on Thursday 27 October 2011**

The meeting started at 3.00 pm

### **Derby City Council:**

Councillor Philip Ingall, on behalf of Derby City Council (as the sole member of the Company), Cath Roff, Strategic Director for Adults, Health & Housing

### **Board Members Present:**

Mike Ainsley, Tony Holme, Iain MacDonald, Mark Menzies, Tabani Ndlovu, Bob Osler, Brian Perry, Margaret Redfern, Dennis Rees, Bob Troup, Roy Webb, Ken Whitehead

### **Officers Present:**

Shaun Bennett, Phil Davies, David Enticott, Susan Hill, Jackie Mitchell, Maria Murphy.

### **11/01 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Paul Bayliss, John Bloxsom, John Keith, Patrick Molson.

Bob Osler, Chair of Derby Homes, opened the Annual General Meeting.

Councillor Ingall and the Chair of Derby Homes signed the Derby City Council and Derby Homes Management Agreement 2012-2022.

### **11/02 Minutes of Previous Meeting on 28 October 2010**

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

### **11/03 Results of Election For South West and South East Tenant Board Members**

It was noted

1. Patrick Molson had been elected unopposed as Tenant Board Member for the South West area of the City for the period 27 October 2011 to October 2013.

2. Ken Whitehead had been re-elected Tenant Board Member for the South East area of the City for the period 27 October 2011 to October 2014.

#### **11/04 Results of Election for South East, South West and North West City Board Members**

It was noted

1. Harry Margett had been elected unopposed as City Board Member for the South East area of the City for the period 27 October 2011 to October 2014.
2. Ian Veitch had been elected unopposed as City Board Member for the South East area of the City for the period 27 October 2011 to October 2014.
3. Jack Wray had been elected unopposed as City Board Member for the South East area of the City for the period 27 October 2011 to October 2014.
4. Janice Platt had been elected as City Board Member for the North West area of the City for the period 27 October 2011 to October 2013.
5. one South East City Board Member post standing down at the Annual General Meeting on 27 October 2011 was vacant.
6. two South West City Board Member posts were vacant as a result of resignations.

#### **11/05 Retirement and Appointment of Independent Board Members**

The retirement of John Bloxsom on 27 October 2011 and appointment of Mark Menzies on 27 October 2011 until October 2014 was noted.

#### **11/06 Appointment of External Auditors 2011/12**

The Board received a report to appoint the external auditors and fix their remuneration for the year.

**Agreed**

The Board

1. appointed PKF LLP as external auditors for the year 2011/12
2. authorised total payment of £21,200 for the year 2011/12.

**11/07 Attendance at Board and Other Meetings for 2010/11**

The attendance of Board Members at Board meetings, in compliance with Article 18 (7 and 8), and other meetings held during 2010/11, was noted.

**11/08 Annual Report of the Board of Directors, Auditor's Report to Members and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2011**

The Chair congratulated Jim Joyce, Resident Involvement and Resource Centre Manager, and his team for the hard work in completing the Annual Report.

The Chair then presented Derby Homes' Annual Report of the Board of Directors, Auditor's Report to Members and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2011.

He commented on Derby Homes' achievements for 2011, in particular the setting up of the Review Panel, and achievement of Local Offers. He said it was a very honest report and tells you where we have done well, haven't done well and where there is still work to be done which will be carried over to next year.

The Report also provided detail on the company's performance which was an indication of how well Derby Homes is doing as a business.

**11/09 Report of the Chair of the Board of Derby Homes to Members, including reports from the Chairs of Committees and City Board**

The Chair thanked Councillor Ingall for his support over the last year and for signing the ten year Management Agreement today. He also thanked Cath Roff, who has provided support to him over the year. In addition, he thanked tenants and leaseholders who had worked with Derby Homes to achieve its targets and the Board for all their support and dedication over the last year.

He highlighted a few achievements including the improvement of and increased services available through Derby Homes' website, tenants dashboard and the introduction of SMS text messaging, the successful merger of the two Local Housing Boards into the City Board, the Tenancy Fraud Initiative where staff had carried out occupancy checks, setting up Derby Homes' Gas Servicing team and investing

over £11 million this year to improve energy efficiency to the housing stock. The continued success with the Junior Wardens Scheme, Tenancy Sustainment Team and the Family Intervention Project, were also highlighted.

The Chair commented on three areas that Derby Homes would like to address over the next few years:

- managing successful communities and helping young people who are unemployed to have a positive outlook to gain training and jobs;
- making the best use of the HRA reforms in the future, by having extra money to spend on repairs and to invest in new build, meeting the needs of elderly people;
- preparing for the changes to welfare benefit which tenants will hear more about in the months ahead.

Iain MacDonald, Chair of Resources, Remuneration & Regeneration Committee and Dennis Rees, Chair of City Board reported on the work and achievements of their Committees during 2010/11.

#### **11/10 Report of the Chair of the Audit Committee**

Tony Holme, Chair of Audit Committee, presented a report on the activities of the Committee during the past 12 months in connection with the financial year 2010/11.

The report was noted and accepted as compliance with Derby Homes' Scheme of Delegation.

#### **11/11 Derby City Council's response to the Annual Report of the Board of Directors, Auditor's Report to Members and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2011**

In accepting the Annual Report of the Board of Directors, Auditor's Report to Members and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2011, Councillor Philip Ingall, Council Cabinet Member for Housing and Advice, congratulated Derby Homes on their new ten year contract managing the Council's housing stock. He said this will bring the challenge of finding annual savings through increased efficiencies and innovative ways of working and he urged the organisation to continue improving services to tenants and leaseholders. He also thanked Derby Homes' staff and Board Members for their hard work.

He welcomed the two new Board Members, Mike Ainsley and Mark

Menzies, to their first AGM.

He commented on 23 Local Offers as identified by tenants and leaseholders' and Derby Homes' commitment to continuous improvement over the last 6 months. Targets had been set against each Local Offer and to date, ten local offer targets had been achieved and four had not yet been achieved. Derby Homes and its partners will be working towards reaching the targets set for all these Local Offers. He congratulated Derby Homes' staff on achieving the local offers targets, to date.

He highlighted the success of building new affordable housing and the completion of the first ten ALMO owned properties, all built to a high energy efficiency standard in mixed tenure developments in partnership with Strata Homes. He also referred to the 35 new council houses which Derby Homes was now managing as part of its stock. These were built by Bramall Construction and were the first council houses to be built in Derby in 30 years.

A key change for the coming year will be the reform of the housing finance system which will allow councils to keep the money they collect from rents in order to pay for the management and maintenance of the housing stock, directly in exchange for accepting an agreed proportion of the national housing debt. The new finance system will mean that further savings generated through smarter ways of working can be directly reinvested into tenants' homes.

He commented that It will be important to cement and build upon the existing good working relationship that the Council and Derby Homes has, as public funds to support projects and investment will become more scarce.

He looked forward to another year of working with Derby Homes to provide the best outcomes for tenants and leaseholders.

#### **11/12 Any other competent business**

There was no other business.

#### **11/13 Questions from the floor**

Lynn Gilbey referred to solar panels for heating, which she hoped all tenants will get eventually. She said it had been explained on the news that the Government may cut back on the budget. How will Derby Homes manage next year if we cannot buy more solar panels?

The Director of Investment and Regeneration explained the business case of fitting solar panels. It works well based on an agreed level of grant that sets out the feeding tariff; every unit of electricity created from the solar panels, the Council and Derby Homes will receive 43p. This amount helped Derby Homes to afford setting up the system in the first place; it covered the capital outlay of installing the system on the roofs. However, the Government will review the amount made available through the feed-in tariff. If the tariff reduces slightly, we could try to install the system a little bit cheaper and probably continue this for many more homes in the City. If the tariff is cut by half, it will be very difficult for us to justify the business case for installing the systems. Derby Homes is hoping that the Government will not reduce the tariff too much so as to make it worthwhile, especially from the business case point of view. It will be a matter of 'watching this space' to see what happens next.

The Chair said that not all Derby Homes' residents will have solar panels as it depends on which direction the homes face in order to maximise the solar panel usage.

Win Buchan commented that the Repairs Team had achieved everything within budget. How was this managed and how will it be for next year?

The Director of Investment and Regeneration replied that when the Repairs Team joined Derby Homes, different ways of trying to reduce costs and improve efficiencies were looked at. One of the improvements was reviewing and evaluating the supply chain where materials are bought from. So far, Derby Homes has achieved savings of about £400,000 a year by moving to suppliers who could provide better value for money.

Another way of achieving value for money was to try to increase workforce productivity to complete more jobs a day. New vehicles will arrive at London Road which will have imprest stock installed in them to save on wasted journeys the operatives will have to make to and from the building merchant to tenants' homes. This will provide a more efficient service. Another improvement is being in control of some of our services and controlling the processes that we use and how we deliver the work. These examples help us to move forward and deliver the service within the budget.

Next year in March we will be installing a new IT system that will further improve efficiencies to deliver our services.

Janice Platt explained that she worked at the Department of Work & Pensions. She had seen over the years that Housing Benefit has been cut for unemployed people. There will be more people losing their homes and becoming council tenants; £67.50 per week was not enough money to start paying towards the rent and increased utility bills. There will not be enough money at the end of the day.

The Director of Housing and Customer Service replied that Derby Homes would work with tenants to sustain their tenancy. At the moment, Derby Homes is trying to focus on specific groups who will be affected by the welfare benefits changes by spending time with tenants, advising and supporting them to deal with these changes.

Also, more work is required with people before they become tenants so that they fully understand the responsibility of being a tenant. Staff will spend more time with people, before they move into a council property, so that they are fully aware of what is required in paying rents and claiming benefits. Overall, it will give tenants the confidence to access everything that is available to them. Derby Homes also needs to strengthen its relationships more with its partners, for example, the Midland Community Finance and Credit Union, so that tenants could access responsible borrowing options. Derby Homes is working very closely with the Council's Benefits Team and colleagues at Derby Advice so as to strengthen resources to minimize the impact of the benefits changes.

Harry Margett explained that he attended a TAROE event yesterday. There was a presentation from three members of staff on what is going to happen in the future. Was it possible for Derby Homes to present someone to speak to our tenants and staff on the subject? The Chair asked him to speak to the Chief Executive afterwards.

### **Date of next meeting**

The next Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 11 October 2012

The meeting ended at 4.03 pm.

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On behalf of Derby City Council (sole member of the Company)

Signed as true and accurate record of the meeting held on 27 October 2011.