

DERBY HOMES LIMITED

MINUTES OF THE OPERATIONAL BOARD MEETING

Held on Thursday 20 October 2016

The meeting started at 6.00 pm

Operational Board Members present:

Paul Bayliss, Andrew Beresford, Richard Bruford, Tony Holme, Samantha Hudson, Bob MacDonald (Chair), Elastus Mwaba, Dennis Rees, Jsan Shepherd, Anna Skrobisz, Mick Whitehead.

Officers present:

Annabelle Barwick, Steve Bayliss, Paul Cole, Andrew McNeil, Clare Mehrbani, Maria Murphy, Sophie Reynolds, Daniel Robertson, Jackie Westwood.

Others in attendance:

Mike Ainsley, Adele Styles, Jenny Veater, Ian Veitch, Youth Board members Amal Hudson, Sophie Holland, Rooney Dhillon, Liam Marshall.

16/93 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Jim Elks, Jackie Mitchell and Chris Forrester.

16/94 Admission of late items

There was one late item admitted regarding a contribution to support the Derby Churches' Nightshelter extreme winter weather provision.

16/95 Derby Churches Nightshelter 2016/17

Paul Bayliss – Declared an interest as an employee of the Police Service, noted within the report.

The Operational Board received a report requesting consideration be given to making a donation to the Derby Churches Nightshelter Extreme Winter Weather Provision, subject to the consent of Derby City Council.

Agreed

The Operational Board agreed, subject to consent of Derby City Council, that Derby Homes contributes £10,000 in 2016/17 to support the Derby Churches Nightshelter Extreme Winter Weather Provision 2016/17.

16/96 Declarations of interests

The Council Board Member was noted as declaring their interest in matters relating to Derby City Council.

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

16/97 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 25 August 2016 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

16/98 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

16/99 Questions from members of the public

There were no questions from the public.

16/100 Presentation by the Youth Board: Independent Living Training in Schools

The Operational Board received a presentation by the Youth Board on Independent Living Training in Schools.

It was suggested that the scheme could be rolled out to other schools and could be made more general as it could relate to any rented properties, social or private and it was also suggested that the initiative should be promoted widely and put forward for any relevant awards.

The Operational Board congratulated the Youth Board on their work.

16/101 Workshop – Review of Derby Homes

Maria Murphy, Managing Director provided an update to the Operational Board regarding the Council's review of Derby Homes.

16/102 Part B Supplementary Questions.

Questions relating to items on Part B of the agenda were raised prior to the meeting and are attached at Appendix 1.

There were no supplementary questions raised.

16/103 Operational Board Forward Plan

The Operational Board received a copy of the forward plan of items for future meetings.

Agreed

The Operational Board noted the Forward Plan and proposed that the next Operational Board meeting should take place on Thursday 15 December 2016.

16/104 Customer Communications Strategy

The Operational Board received a report on the new Customer Communications Strategy which sets out Derby Homes' key focus over the next three years in relation to communicating with both customers and staff.

Paul Bayliss said that the Strategy is good but we should be using our database which can be used to really interact with customers in more ways than before and can provide us with a customer insight.

Tony Holme noted that the Leaseholder focus group is not mentioned in the strategy.

Paul Cole agreed to take the comments on board and make the relevant adjustments.

Agreed

The Operational Board approved the new Customer Communications Strategy 2016/19.

16/105 Remedy & Compensation Policy

The Operational Board received a report which outlined that the Remedy and Compensation Policy had been reviewed in line with the 3 year policy review programme. The policy had not been changed significantly.

The Operational Board and Customer Service and Equalities Manager agreed the policy could be improved to include guidance on compensation levels.

Agreed

The Operational Board requested that the report be brought back to the next meeting in December with the recommended amendments.

16/106 Rent in Advance

The Operational Board received a report providing details of the new Rent in Advance policy. The policy enforces the terms and conditions of the tenancy agreement. The Rent in Advance Policy will apply to all new tenants and transferring tenants who are not already in credit with their rent account.

Jsan Shepherd suggested asking people on the housing register to start saving the week in advance payment before they are offered a property, so as not to fall into debt.

If approved, the policy will be publicised straight away.

Agreed

The Operational Board approved the Rent in Advance Policy.

16/107 Housing Advice Surgery – Austin Neighbourhood Base

The Operational Board received a report requesting approval for Derby Homes to occupy another building on Browning Circle as the lease of the current building is being terminated. The report proposed offering a reduced drop in surgery at the proposed new location of 2 hours a week.

Paul Bayliss suggested completely ending the service as 6 people attending sessions isn't viable to keep the service open. He also suggested using Derby Homes' campaign van to replace the loss of the service.

Agreed

The Operational Board agreed to close the service at the Austin Neighbourhood Base and that tenants use alternative methods to contact Derby Homes.

16/108 Service Delivery Update

The Operational Board received a joint report from Heads of Service providing a general overview and update on current issues.

Agreed

The Operational Board noted the report.

16/109 Rent Arrears & Welfare Reform Update

The Operational Board received a report giving detail on;

- August position on rent arrears.
- Detail of Discretionary Housing Payments.
- Welfare Reforms and how we are mitigating the impacts.

Agreed

The Operational Board noted the report.

16/110 Customer Engagement & Community Development Update

The Operational Board received a report which provided an update of the changes made to the Customer Engagement and Community Development, including the Partnership Forum, a new team member and Love Parks 2016.

Agreed

The Operational Board noted the report.

16/111 Draft Minutes of Derby Homes Board meeting held on Thursday 6 October 2016

The Operational Board received the draft minutes of Derby Homes Board meeting on Thursday 6 October 2016.

Agreed

The Operational Board noted the draft minutes of Derby Homes Board meeting on Thursday 6 October 2016

Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 15 December 2016 (to be confirmed) at 6.00 pm in the Large Training Room at London Road.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm.

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CHAIR

Signed as true and accurate record of the meeting held on Thursday 20 October 2016.

Operational Board 20 October 2016

Part B Queries

B1 - While D2N2 has been successful in obtaining 3 year funding for this new post (Personal Navigator), I seem to remember that Derby Advice itself is under threat of losing its funding next year. Is this true and is it still under threat?

Derby Advice has been identified as a service where general fund savings could be achieved. This would only affect the general fund element of the service (welfare rights to non-council tenants) not the Housing Revenue Account funded element (money Advice and welfare rights to council tenants). Any change would not affect grant funded posts. A cabinet decision is expected December 2016.

B1 - Lift replacements. As recognised, this has been an issue for Easton Court residents. Can you please confirm how long the lift will be out of action and that no residents will be trapped in their flats.

The lift will be out of action for up to 7 weeks and residents have been informed of this by letter. Two residents are mostly housebound and will be affected. They have been offered alternative accommodation but have opted to remain in their flats during works with support from concierge staff.

B1 - Are the Nightingale Road flats one bedroom to help with downsizing?

The decision for one bed flats at Nightingale was partially to provide much needed smaller units which might be available for downsizing and as a best use of the footprint of the existing building.

B1 - Have we had to release any apprentices at the end of their apprenticeship and if so do we help them find employment?

Since our Apprenticeship Programme started all apprentices have either found employment or moved onto other training opportunities. The cohort of trade apprentices that started with Derby Homes in 2013, end in July 2017 and we are working with them with regards to finding employment post July 2017. Trade apprentices have already started to gain employment with Derby Homes. Business Admin level 2 apprenticeships are for a 12 month period and all of our apprentices that have been on that programme have gone onto further employment with us or Derby City Council and have also been able to continue to NVQ Level 3.

B2 - Are we currently having to pursue any tenants in arrears for non-engagement and repossession of property?

In respect of your question, B2 - are we currently having to pursue any tenants in arrears for non-engagement and repossession of property? (Rent arrears and welfare reform update). Your question is quite wide ranging as this area of work is the 'day job'. Is this in relation to Universal Credit or Under Occupation Charge for cases for example.

In view of the recent living housing standards report are any Derby Homes properties likely to fail this standard? I know the Rykneld Estate for example has some properties with damp issues?

We meet the Decent Homes standard and we are aiming to meet a higher Derby Standard. This includes improving components in a property such as a kitchen or a bathroom in shorter timescales than is expected under Decent Homes. Without knowing the criteria required to meet the Living Standard we cannot say if it has been met or not and this is something we will need to look into.

With regard to repairs that need to be carried out such as damp, these are carried out once they have been reported and potentially following subsequent investigations. So long as necessary repairs are carried out in a reasonable timescale we would assume that we would not be failing any housing standard.

What does D2N2 stands for?

D2N2 is the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

Further information can be found on their website <http://www.d2n2lep.org>

What type of recruitment will be commencing shortly?

Recruitment will commence shortly for the 3 year post of Welfare Rights/Money Advice Interviewer from the D2N2- Money Sorted Project.