

Company Number 05564649
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited

BOARD MEETING

1 NOVEMBER 2006

Present

Mr Sidney Hall, Mrs Val Hartley, Mrs Lyn Ralph (Vice Chair), Councillor George Beck, Councillor Joe Blackham (Vice Chair), Councillor Paul Coddington, Councillor John Mills, Mr Peter Chapman (Chair), Mrs Kate Radovanovic, Ms Gill Taylor, Mr John Young

In attendance

Mr Martin Musgrave (Chief Executive), Ms Judith Jones, Mr Paul Hopkinson, Mr Trevor Lincoln, Ms Linda Milan, Ms Isha Lohia,

Also in Attendance

Mr Andrew Bish (DMBC)

	ACTION
1. Apologies and Quorum	
1.1 Mr James Parkin, Mr Charles Wyatt, Councillor Mrs Margaret Ward, Mr Michael Hardy, Ms Kay Nunns	
1.2 It was noted that a quorum was present.	
2. Election of Chair and Vice Chairs	
2.1 As Board Members were required to elect their Chair and Vice Chairs for the new term this item was Chaired by Martin Musgrave	
2.2 Mr Musgrave announced that two nominations had been received for the position of Chair. He asked that the two candidates, Mr Peter Chapman and Mrs Lyn Ralph leave the meeting.	
2.3 The CEO informed the meeting that by the closing date for receiving nominations, noon on 27 October 2006, Mr Chapman's nomination had not received a seconder, although one had come forward prior to the meeting. Members agreed that they wished to consider Mr Chapman's nomination.	
2.4 Members undertook a secret ballot, the majority of	

	votes being cast for Mr Chapman.	ACTION
2.5	Mr Chapman and Mrs Ralph rejoined the meeting again and were informed of the Board's decision. Mr Chapman thanked the Members for entrusting him with the responsibility.	
2.6	The Chair proposed that the two previous Vice Chairs be asked to continue to undertake their roles.	
2.7	Members accepted the proposal and therefore Mr Chapman is elected Chair of the Board and Mrs Ralph and Councillor Blackham continue to serve as the Vice Chairs for the new term.	
3.	Minutes of meeting held on 04 October 2006 and matters arising	
3.1	The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2006 were agreed as a true and accurate record.	
3.2	Matters Arising	
3.2.1	STATUS survey report – Minute 5.3.1: Trevor Lincoln said that we had received above the target level of responses and the report is due before the end of November. He said it would be tabled at the December Board Meeting.	TL
3.2.2	Investigation of the constitutional documents to ascertain in which organisation's name contracts could be let – Minute 7.12: Trevor Lincoln informed that a brief presentation was given to the Special Board Meeting on this subject.	
3.2.3	Approaching DMBC officials regarding market testing proposal and sending a briefing pack to the Board Members – Minute 7.15 & 7.16: The CEO informed that the points had been discussed at the Special Board Meeting.	
3.2.4	Negotiating Management Fees with DMBC – Minute 10.6: Trevor Lincoln said that he would update the Board at the December Meeting.	TL
3.2.5	Sponsorship of the Tickhill Football Team – Minute 14.1: The CEO said that an item was to be included in the next edition of the tenants' newsletter. This would invite requests for	

<p>sponsorship from clubs or organisation that could show that the money would benefit those living in homes managed by the company. In this particular instance only one member of the team lived in such a home and therefore this application will be considered when other applications have been received.</p>	ACTION
<p>4. Minutes of the Special Board Meeting held on 18 October 2006 and Matters Arising</p>	
<p>4.1 The Chair said that following discussions on the election of Independent Members on the Board, in paragraphs 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7, Mr John Young had returned to the Meeting and this point should be included in the minutes.</p>	IL
<p>4.2 Matters Arising</p>	
<p>4.2.1 Inviting Dr R Allen to join the East Area Board – Minute 2.6 & 2.7: Mr Paul Hopkinson proposed that Members of the East Area Board be first consulted before an invitation was extended to Dr Allen to join the Area Board. He said if the Board agreed, he would speak to East Area Board at their next meeting to take their recommendations.</p>	PH
<p>4.2.2 Board agreed to the suggestion</p>	
<p>5. Chief Executive's Report</p>	
<p>5.1 A written report was provided to the Board. The CEO elaborated on the following points:</p>	
<p>5.2 Measuring our performance: The CEO said he was pleased to inform the Board that the average time to relet a property has dropped to just under 46 days and he attributed this improvement in performance to the hard work of SLHD staff.</p>	

- 5.3 **Smoking at work:** The Chief Executive shared the concerns expressed by the workers at the last union meeting about the dangers of passive smoke. The union wished to clarify the company's policy re the protection of the health of workers who have to work in tenant's homes who smoke. **ACTION**
- 5.3.1 The Chair asked if this issue is limited to the local union or it is national in nature. The CEO said that he had seen the issue raised by the North Links Health Authority on the television but was not sure if the Union workers' request was related to it.
- 5.3.2 Mrs Lyn Ralph suggested providing them with a mask while Councillor George Beck felt this was unnecessary. Mr Andrew Bish asked if the workers were given any instructions about what they could do if the tenants smoked while they were at work. Mr Paul Hopkinson said that staff could request tenants to refrain from smoking while they worked in the property.
- 5.3.3 Mr John Young said it was unfair if we asked a tenant; at whose property our workers/contractors need to work for several days, to refrain from smoking. One cannot be asked to stop smoking in his/her own house.
- 5.3.4 Mr John Young said that we should ensure that contractors impose similar restrictions on their staff as any imposed by SLH. Paul Coddington said that whatever steps we take, we need to ensure that there is proper balance regarding the rights of tenants as well as our workers/contractors.
- 5.3.5 The CEO said we are looking to tackle this problem through some education and poster campaigns and the issue has been referred to the Health and Safety Group for their recommendation.
- 6. Decent Homes Spend Profile and Decent Homes Procurement Strategy**
- 6.1 This report was presented by Trevor Lincoln and the purpose was to provide SLHD Board members with an update on the yearly value of works and the current status and timescale's associated with the procurement process for the delivery of Decent Homes works to Doncaster MBC's Housing stock following the rescheduling of the Audit Commission

inspection to March 2007

ACTION

- 6.2 He referred to Tables 4.2.1 and 4.3.1 in the report outlining the available resources and planned expenditures until 2011. He said in Table 4.3.1, we have tried to smooth out the decency investment over a period of 5 years.
- 6.3 Trevor Lincoln then talked through the timetable drawn out for the appointment of contractors, in paragraph 5.2 of the report.
- 6.4 Talking about tender evaluation, he said tenders will be evaluated and scored on a quality to price ratio. He requested the Board to endorse the weightings proposed in Table 5.3.1
- 6.5 Pointing at the Price: Quality ratio (30 :70) for Windows and Doors package, Mr Andrew Bish questioned why it was different from other packages that had equal weightage for price and quality. Trevor Lincoln said our existing consultants Savills had advised this weighting.
- 6.6 Mr Bish said he is concerned that the procurement for Door and Window package is treated differently from other procurement processes and it did not fully reflect the wider issues. He said there are concerns relating to health and safety, legal procurement and the economic impact.
- 6.7 The CEO said he understood Mr Bish's concern and the fact that it is Council's money and should be spent wisely. He said it was fair for the Council to request that the local economy is considered. If the Council felt that a ratio of 50-50 was more appropriate the proposal could be amended to 50:50.
- 6.8 Mrs Lyn Ralph said she would not endorse this, as she preferred greater weighting should be given to quality. She said we were meant to be considering the tenants and suggested going back to the 70-30 ratio that was in place at the time of the Bramall Construction contract.
- 6.9 Trevor Lincoln said the terms and conditions of these contracts would be different from the ones we had with Bramall Construction.

- | | | |
|-------------|---|---------------|
| 6.10 | Mr John Young asked if the bidders are made aware of the evaluation criteria in the tender document. Trevor Lincoln said that we do not have to give the fine details of the evaluation criteria, but an outline about how the evaluation will be done is given. | ACTION |
| 6.11 | Trevor Lincoln said every contractor is going to provide a different standard of service and we need to select them wisely to balance the cost and quality. | |
| 6.12 | Mr John Young said that he would expect all the contractors to provide the same quality of work. | |
| 6.13 | Action:

Update on tender evaluation, including the agreed price quality ratio (TL and CEO to discuss with DMBC officials) be provided to the meeting when available. | TL |
| 6.14 | The Board approved the proposal. | |
| 6.15 | The CEO shared with the Board, details of a letter that he had received from the government regarding the restructuring of the Decent Homes proposals. He has asked to meet with the Government officials in Leeds on 14 November to talk about our options. He said he was concerned that any delays would result in the fulfilment of promises made to tenant being delayed. He said three types of properties were most vulnerable in this situation: the ones falling under the projects like pathfinder, the non-traditional stock and the sheltered stock ie Graham House where long-term viability is in doubt. He said that he and colleagues from DMBC would try to ensure that the outcome of the meeting causes least pain to our customers and Doncaster. | |
| 6.16 | The CEO said a brief will be emailed to Members after the meeting on 14 November and a detailed report would be presented at the December Board Meeting. | MM |
| 7. | Service Standard Review – Report | |
| 7.1 | Ms Judith Jones presented this report and the purpose was to inform the Board of the proposed | |

service standards following consultation with customers

ACTION

7.2 Giving a brief background of service standards she said initially there were 140 separate service standards covering eleven different service areas. But as many of the standards were immeasurable, unclear and no real benefit to the customer, a review commenced in April 2006 to produce a suite of service standards that would be challenging, measurable and developed in consultation with customers. The review has resulted in a reduction in the number of service standards from 140 to 64 across ten service areas and can be seen in the appendix to this report.

7.3 She informed monitoring mechanisms are being put in place to ensure that the service standards can be monitored for compliance. This will form part of the quarterly Performance Monitoring Report presented to Board. The first service standard monitoring report will be produced in February 2007 and cover the period November 2006 to January 2007

7.4 The Board approved the report.

8. Doncaster Decent Homes Declines Procedure

8.1 Mr Paul Hopkinson presented this report and the purpose was to provide the Board with an analysis of reasons given by tenants declining decent homes works.

8.2 After giving a brief background to the report, he discussed the analysis of the last 20 declines and said that out of 20 people, 8 people declined because of health reasons, 10 because of disturbance, 6 people disagreed with the work and the remaining 2 gave some other reason for declining decent homes works. He also said that majority of the tenants who declined the decency works were elderly people in their 80s and 90s.

8.3 Paul Hopkinson said the current rate of decline was 2.3% and is remarkably low when compared to other ALMOs. However, we are encouraging everyone to accept the works and have developed a DVD to show the reality of the amount of disruption. Mr Andrew Bish questioned the appropriateness of using DVDs if the age profile of

<p>the tenants was beyond 80 years. Another Member suggested that a better way would be to use those tenants as our ambassadors who had got the decent work completed in their homes and were happy with the outcomes.</p>	<p>ACTION</p>
<p>8.4 Action:</p> <p>PH to consider the feasibility of implementing the suggestion of using tenants as ambassadors.</p>	<p>PH</p>
<p>8.5 The Chair asked if the properties where the tenants decline decency works, are considered to have attained decency standard by the inspectors. The CEO said it was not so.</p>	
<p>8.6 The Board noted the contents of the report</p>	
<p>9 Ferry Boat Lane</p>	
<p>9.1 This report was presented by Trevor Lincoln and the purpose was to provide the information required to make an informed recommendation on the future of Ferry Boat Lane Flats in Mexborough</p>	
<p>9.2 Giving a brief background of the flats in Ferry Boat Lane, Trevor Lincoln said Ferry Boat Lane Flats are a traditionally brick built 2 storey block, containing 12 1 bed flats constructed circa 1950 and 9 out of the 12 flats are currently classified as long term void. He then referred to the investments required to bring those flats to the decency standards. He said the amount was substantial and may be better to clear the properties and reuse the land.</p>	
<p>9.3 The CEO also informed the Board Members about the problems that the existing tenants were facing at the 3 flats.</p>	
<p>9.4 Mr Andrew Bish said a collaborative approach with DMBC is essential otherwise it will lead to making uninformed decisions.</p>	
<p>9.5 Councillor John Mills said looking at the current waiting list on social housing, he was not in favour of demolishing properties. He said he understood the urgency of the matter but would propose that other alternatives be considered like bringing in another RSL etc.</p>	

9.6	The CEO said he is as much against demolishing properties knowing the current situation but we have a duty of care towards the tenants living in the flats at Ferry Boat Lane. We undertake options appraisal in all similar circumstances. We can then go to the Council and others to involve them in the process. He proposed that an ex gratia payment be made to the tenants living in the properties to enable the site to be totally vacated while the decision process proceeds.	ACTION
9.7	The Board decided that SLHD consult the Council in the matter and the 3 tenants be made ex gratia payment to resolve the safety issues if necessary.	TL, MM
10	CRE Race Equality in Housing	
10.1	Ms Judith Jones presented this report and the purpose was to update the Board on our compliance with Commission for Racial Equality Code of Practice on Racial Equality in Housing.	
10.2	She spoke of the Race Relations Act 1976 and explained the aspects covered by Code of Practice.	
10.3	She said we are liaising with DMBC to make sure we comply with the indicators. We cannot sign up to all the recommendations but we can sign the general recommendations.	
10.4	She said we are clear about Governance as we have leadership and commitment from the Board. She then talked about Choice-based lettings and said we are working to improve translation service, tackle racial harassment, anti-social behaviour etc.	
10.5	Talking about involvement of residents and tenants, she said Tenants and Residents Associations (TARA) are fully recognised as key bodies.	
10.6	Referring to paragraph 5.4.9 of the report regarding Choice Based Letting System proving better for the BME Communities when applying for council properties, Mr Andrew Bish asked if it was written in the local or the national context. Judith Jones said that this was the result of research from the pilot areas.	
10.7	Referring to Brendalyn Langshaw's resignation from the Board, the Chair said it was disappointing that	

ACTION

we lost a colleague from the BME Community and enquired if there was any facility of co-opting where more Members from diverse ethnic communities could join the Board. Trevor Lincoln said such a provision was there.

10.8 Judith Jones said we are laying emphasis on mentoring and shadowing opportunities so that these persons would gain the confidence to apply for Board and Area Board Membership.

10.9 The Board noted the contents of the report.

11 Monitoring Report SLA - Service Level Agreements between St Leger Homes of Doncaster and DMBC. Progress and Monitoring Report.

11.1 Trevor Lincoln presented this report and the purpose was to advise Board Members of the progress towards a fit for purpose suite of Service Level Agreements with the Council, and performance of the Councils services where standards have been agreed.

11.2 He said the report was divided into two parts. In the first part we have details of progress and outstanding issues pertaining to various SLAs. The work is fairly progressive and we are aiming to clear any remaining issues before the end of November.

11.3 Trevor Lincoln said in the second part of the report, we are ensuring that the SLAs are monitored effectively. He said Jane Davies has agreed with the DMBC colleagues that we will produce a quarterly monitoring report. We hope to report more progresses after the second quarter.

11.4 Mrs Lyn Ralph congratulated him for the progress so far. Trevor Lincoln said he felt Jane Davies should be thanked and congratulated for all her work and he would pass on this message to her.

11.5 The Board noted the contents of this report.

12 Board Members Attendance

12.1 The purpose of this report was to confirm the register of Board Members attendance

12.2 Members confirmed the register as an accurate record.

13 Rent Payment Card Supplier	ACTION
13.1 Trevor Lincoln presented this report and the purpose was to provide Board Members with an updated position with regards to the re-branding of the Rent Payment Cards and the implementation of the Pay Zone facility as a new payment method for customers.	
13.2 Another purpose of this report was to ask for Board's approval to the proposed pilot with Alliance & Leicester commencing on 1st December 2006.	
13.3 Trevor Lincoln said that Alliance & Leicester were suggesting that a firm commitment was essential for the success of the pilot scheme. He suggested we retain Alliance & Leicester as our suppliers because apart from other issues, we are legally bound to give them a year's notice if we decide to terminate the contract.	
13.4 He said the other option was to appoint All Pay & Co-operative Bank but since Alliance & Leicester are ready to incorporate our requirements and have delivered a reduced quotation, we should continue with Alliance & Leicester.	
13.5 He said an advantage of staying with Alliance & Leicester would be that we will not need to do any additional IT set ups for the pilot scheme, as we have already been using their system.	
13.6 Mr Andrew Bish said that the Corporate Director of Finance at DMBC should be consulted before a final decision is taken in this regard. Trevor Lincoln said this has already taken place.	
13.7 The Board approved the report.	
14 Minutes from Area Boards and Committees:	
14.1 The Board approved the minutes.	
15 Any Other Business	
15.1 The CEO requested the Board to hold the January Board Meeting on or around the 17th January 2007. He said holding it in the first week may not be possible because of the Christmas holidays.	

15.1.1 The Board approved the suggestion.

ACTION

15.2 Lyn Ralph said the Board Room could not accommodate members satisfactorily when the East and West Area Boards held a joint meeting. She therefore suggested that we could hire Community Rooms from Sid Hall at a charge of £10 an hour.

15.2.1 The Board left the decision with the Executive team.

The meeting ended at 7:50 pm