

Company Number 05564649
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited

BOARD MEETING

7 FEBRUARY 2007

Present

Mr Sidney Hall, Mrs Val Hartley, Mr James Parkin, Mrs Lyn Ralph (Vice Chair), Councillor George Beck, Councillor Joe Blackham (Vice Chair), Councillor Paul Coddington, Councillor Margaret Ward (partial), Councillor John Mills, Mr Peter Chapman (Chair), Mrs Kate Radovanovic, Mr John Young

In attendance

Mr Martin Musgrave (Chief Executive), Judith Jones, Paul Hopkinson, Trevor Lincoln, Linda Milan, Maxine Newton, Dean Rothwell (partial)

Also in Attendance

Maureen Harkin (DMBC)

1. Apologies and Quorum

1.1 Gill Taylor and Michael Hardy.

1.2 It was noted that a quorum was present. Peter Chapman chaired the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest by the Board

2.1 There were no declarations of interest raised.

3. Minutes of meeting held on 17 January 2007 and Matters arising

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2007 with the addition of Michael Hardy's apologies were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3.2 Matters Arising

3.3 **Governance Issues** – Selection and Recruitment of Tenant, Independent and Area Board Members - Minute 8.1: The Working Party had held its first meeting and proposals will be placed before the March meeting of the Board. The proposal will then be taken to the SJC and TARA's for consultation.

ACTION

TL

4. Chief Executive's Report

- 4.1 Martin Musgrave said that he had felt it appropriate to give a verbal report.

He confirmed that SLHD staff are continuing to working hard and are now concentrating their efforts on the forthcoming Inspection in March'07.

- 4.2 The Board were reminded that approximately 3 months ago the company received an Improvement Notice from the Health & Safety Executive regarding the Conisbrough Depot.

Our new Health & Safety Manager, Diane Marshall has now visited all the depots and has expressed some concerns re the layout for our present needs and the increased incidents of "near miss" accidents. A strategy is therefore being developed to bring all 4 existing depots together in new premises and we have commission agents to undertake a search of suitable premises. This should be concluded within the next 3 weeks. This may release potential capital receipts for DMBC.

A discussion ensued regarding the wider accommodation strategy and it was agreed that the it would be useful to have an information report for consideration at the next meeting.

It was also agreed that an Accommodation Strategy report would be brought to the April Board meeting.

TL

5. Preparation for Inspection

- 5.1 Trevor Lincoln presented this report and the purpose was to inform Board members with progress made towards inspection.

- 5.2 He confirmed that the EMT had met with Elaine Samms the Lead Inspector at a pre inspection meeting the previous week that had proved beneficial in terms of advice with the Self Assessment document and other areas of the business. She had confirmed that the Inspection would be carried out over 8 working days Monday to Thursday.

- 5.3 The Boards attention was drawn to the key dates in the main report and raised that there had been no fundamental changes to Appendix B the draft Self Assessment document brought to the previous Board meeting. He welcomed comments from the Board, advising Members that this would be their last chance to comment on the report. Kate Radovanovic passed her comments in writing.

- 5.4 **The Board noted the contents of the report.**

5.5 M Ward joined the meeting.

6. Repairs and Maintenance Market Testing Update No3

6.1 Lyn Ralph declared in interest in that her daughter was Assistant Director for Empty Homes and Services. The Chair took the decision that it was not necessary that Lyn leave the meeting as the agenda item was for information purposes only.

6.2 Paul Hopkinson updated the Board on the progress with the project to Market Test the Repairs and Maintenance service.

6.3 He informed the Board that the initial joint meeting with SLHD, DMBC and the Unions that took place on 24th January was productive. He drew Members attention to the series of forums within DMBC and SLHD that the CWC report is being presented and reviewed. He explained that it was a well founded and robust decision making process that SLHD was adopting and informed Members that the report and its recommendations would be presented at the next Board meeting on 07 March 07.

6.4 **The Board noted the contents of the report.**

7. Rent & Debt Recovery Policy

7.1 Trevor Lincoln presented this report. The purpose was to advise the Board on the review of the existing policy originally agreed at the Board meeting held on 7 June 2006, and for the Board to approve the revised Rent and Debt Recovery Policy.

7.2 Trevor advised the main changes to the policy where highlighted in bold throughout the document. These had been discussed with the SJC who had agreed the changes. Staff would be trained in the application of the new policy to ensure its consistency.

7.3 Judith Jones requested that the implementation date be changed to ensure that staff did not have to contend with the introduction of a new policy during the inspection period. This was agreed. TL

7.4 Lyn Ralph asked for her thanks to be passed on to SLHD staff who were responsible for implementing the newly acquired facility of making payments at Payzone outlets. TL

7.5 A discussion took place around whether the Board was the correct forum for the policy to be approved and that it may need to be approved in consultation with the Council.

It was agreed for the purposes of this meeting the Board approved the revised policy, however clarification should be sought as to whether this was the correct forum. TL

- 8. Draft Revenue Budget for 2007/08 – 2010/11**
- 8.1 Trevor Lincoln introduced this report and the purpose was to report to the Board the 2007/08 to 2010/11 draft budgets for St Leger Homes.
- 8.2 Trevor advised the Board that the management fee once agreed with DMBC would be reported to the Cabinet for approval as part of the HRA, a decision would be made on 26 February. The decision would then be referred to the March board meeting. **TL**
- 8.3 Martin Musgrave added that the EMT considered that the budgets while challenging, would allow services to be improved whilst still increasing efficiencies.
- 8.4 The Board noted and approved the contents of the report.**
- 8.5 Dean Rothwell asked permission from the Chair and left the meeting.
- 9. Status Satisfaction Survey Update**
- 9.1 Trevor Lincoln presented this report and the purpose was to advise the Board on the Status Survey.
- 9.2 Trevor summarised to the Board that the report from BMG had been finalised and signed off. Outcomes from the report indicated that our results mirrored the national trend. Senior Managers had attended a ‘workshop session’ to develop an action plan to address issues contained within the report. He went onto explain that further work was yet to be done on the action plan but assured the Board that it would be completed within the next few weeks and will be presented to Board members. **TL**
- 9.3 The Chair raised that on behalf of the Board he would like to pass on thanks to staff involved in the Status Survey for their efforts and the good work that they had done so far. **TL**
- 9.4 **The Board noted the contents of the report.**
- 10. Standing Orders**
- 10.1 Martin Musgrave requested the Boards permission to bring the Standing Orders report to the next board meeting in March, the Board agreed.
- 11. SLA Progress & Monitoring**
- 11.1 Trevor Lincoln presented this report the purpose was to advise the

Board of the progress since the last report towards having a fit for purpose suite of Service Level Agreements with the Council, and the performance of the Councils services for those where monitoring standards had been agreed.

11.2 The Boards attention was drawn to the summary of efficiencies achieved on the SLA's with a nett total of £977,193. It is acknowledged that further work is required to develop a robust monitoring system and discussions are ongoing with representatives of the Council.

11.3 A member enquired as to the progress made on the Anti Social Behaviour agreement. Members were advised that SLHD were still in consultations with the Council regarding this service.

11.4 **The Board noted the contents of the report.**

12. NDC Work Placement Opportunities

12.1 Judith Jones presented this report the purpose was for the Board to consider submitting bids to the New Deal Communities (NDC) project, approval for placements within the NDC Peoples Opportunity Programme.

12.2 Judith explained that this was an opportunity to work with NDC and there were no risk implications for SLHD. SLHD have had a number of modern apprentices working within the company and it was pleasing how many had moved on to find permanent employment within our company and elsewhere. This project would allow the company to work with the residents of the NDC area, many of whom are our customers. No formal bid has yet been made to NDC, therefore the types of projects referred to in the report have not been agreed but they will have to demonstrate that they improve the areas concerned.

12.3 Martin Musgrave clarified to the Board that this project would be progressed from April.

12.4 **The Board noted and approved the contents of the report.**

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Martin Musgrave raised that Kate Radovanovic had volunteered to be the Board Equality Champion. The Board agreed unanimously with the suggestion.

Proposed the Board formally adopt Kate into the role to which the Board agreed.

13.2 Martin advised Members that Alliance and Leicester will be putting

out a press release in the next two weeks regarding the acceptance of rent payments at these 60+ outlets.

13.3 Members were advised of the importance of attending the training Session on Thursday 15th February, which will review the Board Training Programme. Max Newton will be sending out questionnaires to complete and return to those who are unable to attend.

MN

13.4 Board were reminded of the arrangements preceding the next Board meeting on 7 March. This included lunch at 12:00hrs, SLC followed by a bus tour and presentation in preparation for the Inspection.

Members were advised that a member of the Audit Commission Inspection Team is likely to attend the Board Meeting on 7 March.

13.5 Paul Coddington asked if it would be beneficial if the Main Board and Area Board Members were to get together either socially or through business.

Martin Musgrave supported this suggestion, saying that now Board members had gained confidence in one another as a group this was an excellent step forward.

Considerations were given to an Annual Board Conference, the first of which would take place to coincide with the announcement of the result of the Inspection. Members agreed.

13.6 Concerns over the size of the Boardroom at SLC were raised and the need for extra space. It was agreed once the Area Boards had agreed on the timings of their meetings consideration would be given to an alternative venue.

13.7 Lyn Ralph highlighted to the Board the forthcoming Tenants and Residents day on Saturday 10 March 2007. She went onto explain that it started at 10:00hrs and would be opened by Tommy Joyce MBE.

Peter Chapman agreed to present one of the Oscar awards.

14. Minutes from Area Boards and Committees

14.1 The Board approved the minutes.

The meeting ended at 7.15pm.