

Company Number 05564649
A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England

St Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited

JOINT AREA BOARD MEETING MONDAY 10 MARCH 2008

Present

Andrew Bosmans, Cllr Beryl Roberts, Godwin Mudzimu, Ian Gardner, Lyn Ralph, Cllr Pat Haith, Rory Perrett, Vimbainashe Mbedzi, Cllr Bill Mordue, David Nevett, Cllr Ken Keegan, Cllr Moira Hood, Robert Allen, Rodger Haldenby, Lesley Gilfedder, Mavis Pearson, Sid Hall.

In Attendance

Martin Musgrave (Chief Executive, partial), (Paul Hopkinson (Director of Property Services), Judith Jones (Director of Customers Services), Dean Rothwell (Assistant Director of Financial Services), Janet Clarke (Asst Director of Housing Management), Shauna Brady (PA), Maxine Newton (Board Support Officer).

1a. Apologies and Quorum	ACTION
1.1 Apologies were recorded from Cllr Doreen Woodhouse, Cllr Nigel Hodges, Lin Myers, Vic Lowe, Betty Clayton, Cllr Sandra Holland.	
1.2 It was noted that a quorum was present. The meeting was chaired by Rodger Haldenby.	
1.3 For the benefit of new members introductions were made by all present.	
1b. Minutes of previous meeting held on 14 January 2008	
2.1 The minutes of the joint meeting held on 14 January 2008 were approved as a correct record.	
2. Matters arising from previous minutes held on 14 January 2008	
2.1 From item 3.9 Review of SLHD Governance - members asked for an update, it was agreed to give the update with the Governance agenda items towards the end of the agenda.	
2.2 From item 7.5 CBL – members were advised that a formal agreement with DMBC was being put in place whereby designated senior citizens properties that were not attracting any bids could be allocated to people approaching this age group in bands e.g. those	

over 55 in the first instance. 145 properties are currently in the voids process.

A Member requested that a property at 4, Moffatt Gardens, Clay Lane that she felt had been empty for a prolonged period be investigated.

JJ

The Director of Customer Services agreed to provide information on properties that had been void for longer than 2 months to the next meeting.

JJ

3. Monitor Nominations Made to RSL's

3.1 The Assistant Director of Housing Management presented this report that gave the Area Boards an analysis of nominations made to Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) between 1 April 2007 and 31 January 2008.

3.2 She explained there had been some improvements in percentage terms of nominations made, from 33.5% to 42.5% following meetings with the Housing Associations. Further work is continuing, including a meeting between the RSL's who are still not performing in accordance with agreements and the Director of Customer Services. Members requested that feedback on the outcome of the meeting is provided to the next meeting.

JJ

3.3 **The Joint Area Board noted the contents of the report.**

4. Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Update

4.1 The Director of Customer Services presented this report that provided Area Boards with an update on the progress of Choice Based Lettings after going live on 1 November 2007.

4.2 She commented that it was envisaged that this would be the final update as the review is due to be completed shortly. The information given on this report will be combined with that on the allocations report.

4.3 It was reported that there were still some properties that received few or no bids when they advertised within their allocated banding.

The Housing Register currently has approximately 16,000 applications, although a revised review of over 2,500 applications is expected to lead to a short-term reduction.

The Chair enquired about the level of enquiries and complaints received. He was informed that there had been up to 900 enquiries per week received on the free phone number. These tend to relate to the customers banding.

The level of complaints recorded on the CC online system will be made available at the next meeting. JJ

4.4 Members identified how few family houses were available.

The Chief Executive reported that he had met with Caroline Flint the Minister of Housing to discuss the feasibility of modifying some 1 bed bungalows to 2 bed bungalows or starter homes. He said she was positive about this proposal and he had pointed out that this may encourage some tenants to move into these properties and vacate the larger family accommodation.

SLHD had organized a competition with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) to see how this could be achieved.

It was agreed examples would be brought to the next area board of the concepts discussed. PH

5. Ideas for Development of Estate Improvement Fund (EIF)

5.1 It was agreed that the EIF form had been effective and could be updated for the coming year. That application forms would need to be returned by mid June, date to be agreed.

It was also agreed that an article should be published in April's edition of Houseproud, together with inclusion of the EIF form.

It was confirmed that both the West Area Board and East Area Board would receive £40k funding each for the next financial year.

A discussion took place on new ideas for the funding and it was agreed that any external works to be carried out in the summer months.

6. Election of Chairs/Vice Chairs and Future Appointments of Area Board Members

6.1 The Company Secretary asked permission from the Area Boards to amalgamate agenda items 6 - Election of Chairs/Vice Chairs & item 7 - Future Appointments of Area Board Members.

Members agreed.

She gave a verbal report and informed the Area Board that there had been no further information received regarding the outcome of the Council review. Members were advised that this was due to potential changes within staffing structures.

6.2 She advised that SLHD had been working to review the forward plans for Board and Area Boards to reflect the agreed changes to

the Terms of Reference. The revised forward plans had been sent to the Directors and Assistant Directors for comment, and would be provided to the Area Boards for comment as soon as possible.

LM

- 6.3 It was suggested that Area Board's hold their first local Area Board meeting in September 2008.

From the next Area Board Meeting in May 2008 an Area Board Member would be required to report to the Board on the Area Boards deliberations including performance.

- 6.4 Area Board Members suggested that new members would benefit from seeing the Decency Work being carried out and also visit the Repairs Contact Centre.

Members were informed that visiting homes at various stages of the Decent Homes investment works had been suggested as part of the Board forum days. Arrangements would be made for Members to attend the Repairs Response Centre.

- 6.5 A Member enquired about the protocol of contacting officers within SLHD regarding non- Area Board related issues. It was confirmed that if the Member did not have the details of the correct member of staff or required other clarification they should contact either the Director of Customer Services for the West Area Board or Director of Property Services for the East Area Board.

- 6.6 Cllr Beryl Roberts asked permission from the Chair and left the meeting.

- 6.7 **The Joint Area Board noted the verbal report.**

7. Future Appointments of Area Board Members

- 7.1 Discussed as part of agenda item 6.

EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, on the grounds that exempt information as amended defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule A to the Act is likely to be disclosed.

8. Overview of Procedures for Contractor Tender and Selection

- 8.1 The Assistant Director of Financial Services presented this report that updated the Area Boards in regards to contracts awarded with a

value in excess of £50k in the period 14th December 2007 to 15th February 2008.

8.2 He advised that only one contract had been awarded within the period, that was for the Leadership Development Programme, which had started and was running successfully.

8.3 He then went onto give details of current tenders that are work in progress.

Although only one submission had been received on the bid for fencing in the New Deal for Communities (NDC) area this had established that the work could be completed to specification for £390k.

A Member questioned if any funding was available for areas that fell outside of the NDC boundaries. It was explained that 5% of the Decent Homes funding, i.e. £11m is for environmental works and this will mainly be spent on fencing.

8.4 **The Joint Area Board noted the contents of the report.**

9. Minutes of previous Board and Committee meetings – For Information

9.1 Members noted the minutes of the Finance & Performance Committee dated 30 May 2007, 25 July 2007 & 5 September 2007.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 The Company Secretary asked for volunteers to attend a stand at the Tenants Conference on Saturday 19th April 2008 to promote recruitment to the Area Boards.

Mavis Pearson volunteered her services.

10.2 Members were also reminded of the forthcoming Main Board and Area Board Team Building Event, to be held at the Golf Club in Wheatley. The focus of the evening was to improve communication links between the Board and Area Board Members.

It was agreed that the date of 9th April would be confirmed to members. MN

11. Date and Time of next meeting

11.1 Monday 12th May 2008

The meeting ended at 6.15 pm