

Company Number 05564649  
A Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in England

**St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited**  
**BOARD MEETING**

**3 September 2008**

**Present**

James Parkin, Lyn Ralph, Frank Protheroe, Brian Naughton, Kate Radovanovic, John Young MBE (Chair), Cllr Andrea Milner, Cllr Bill Mordue.

**Co-opted Members**

Rory Perrett, Rodger Haldenby, Betty Clayton.

**In Attendance**

Gary Wells (DMBC).

**Also In Attendance**

Colin Mayhead (Interim Chief Executive), Judith Jones (Director of Customer Services), Trevor Lincoln (Director of Business Planning), Sharon Adam (Asst Director for Empty Homes & Services), Linda Milan (Company Secretary), Maxine Newton (Personal Assistant).

**1. Apologies and Quorum**

1.1 The Chair introduced the Interim Chief Executive Colin Mayhead to the meeting.

Introductions were made around the table.

1.2 Apologies were received from Cllr Stuart Exelby.

1.3 It was noted that a quorum was present and John Young chaired the meeting.

**2. Declarations of Interest by Board Members**

2.1 Lyn Ralph declared an interest in item number 10 – Voids to Decency.

**3. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2008 and matters arising**

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2008 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**3.2 Matters Arising**

3.2.1 The following matters were discussed:-

**From item 3.2.1 – Financial Website** – the Director of Customer

**ACTION**

Services confirmed that Members had received the website link. The launch of the site had resulted in interviews with radio Sheffield and Trax FM.

**From item 5.7 – CBL Presentation** – it was noted that full consultation would begin shortly.

**From item 8.4 – Savings of £2,082,739** – it was reported that an inaccuracy had been found. It was agreed that a further report would be brought to the next meeting.

TL

**Members agreed.**

**4a West Area Board Nomination to Main Board (verbal)**

4a.1 The Company Secretary announced that, as agreed at the Board Meeting on 4 June 2008, the Area Boards had sought nominations to the post of Co-opted Board Member until the 2008 AGM. The West Area Board wished to nominate Mrs Betty Clayton to this position.

Board Members were reminded that at the Board meeting on 17 January 2007 the Board had agreed to Co-opt a maximum number of 3 persons to the Board.

Members agreed that due to the recent resignations and short time period that the additional Co-option should be agreed.

**Board considered and agreed Betty Clayton's co-option until the AGM 2008.**

**4b Board Member Nominations to Area Boards (verbal)**

4b.1 The Company Secretary stated in order to comply with Company Governance at least 2 Board Members should sit on the Area Boards. At the present time only 1 Board Member is attending each of the Area Boards.

At the Board meeting on 9 May 2007, Board agreed that 3 Board Members should form part of the membership of each of the Area Boards.

**Board agreed to review the Board Membership of Area Boards at the AGM 2008.**

**5. Chief Executives Report (verbal) - Confidential**

**5.1 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 19721, 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.

- 5.2 The Director of Customer Services gave an overview of the recommendations from the 26 August 2008 Special Audit Committee meeting.

**Board agreed the recommendations in the minutes and the associated Terms of Reference.**

It was noted that the Terms of Reference document needed amending from 'conduce' to 'conduct' at bullet point 4.

JJ

**6. Area Board Feedback – Performance Information – Non Confidential**

- 6.1 The Chair of the East Area Board gave an overview of the May 2008 Performance Information discussed at the 14 July Area Board meeting.

**Rent Arrears** – Members had sought clarification on the action plan to reduce rent arrears against annual debt. They were informed the plan was Borough wide to ensure consistency. It has been noted that a disproportional proportion of arrears arise from new tenancies. It is hoped the new website 'Moneywise' will act as a tool to assist tenants.

**Appointments Made and Kept** – Members were given an update on mobile working and short presentation on the Optitime system at the Joint Area Board. Figures are now above target.

**Gas Servicing** – members were given a 'Gas No Access' presentation, figures indicate that the Borough is on target however, North East and South East are still areas of concern regarding Environmental Protection Act Notices, service letters not being sent out in time and abortive visits by engineers. Area Board Members will continue to monitor progress.

**Decent Homes Progress** – an update was given at the meeting for the 2007/2008 program. There had been learning experiences in the first year of delivery. There had been an average number of declines and no access cases for the Decency work compared with other ALMO's , but future key areas was to target no-access properties and declines.

**Urgent Repairs** – members congratulated the Repair team for the good results and exceeding their targets.

- 6.2 The Chair of the West Area Board gave an overview of the May 2008 Performance Information discussed at the 14 July Area Board meeting.

Focus was around:-

**Digital TV** – provision of the switch over to digital TV and ensuring that tenants in high rise blocks get the same access to services as those in low rise houses has been an ongoing concern.

**Batch repairs** – similarly the categorisation and allocation of batch repairs has been a point for discussion over the last few meetings.

**Repairs Contact Call Centre** – there was a discussion around the operation of the Repairs Contact Centre, and the time taken to complete non urgent repairs.

**Evictions** – members were also interested in the report on evictions, they are concerned that the process is carried out in an inefficient manner.

- 6.3 **Decent Homes Work** – the Interim Housing Director for DMBC suggested that a revised program completion date needed to be given to tenants.

**It was agreed that the Decent Homes Programme and Specification Review would be reviewed and agreed at the next board meeting in October to take recommendations to DMBC.**

KH

## 7. **Equal Opportunities Policy Review**

- 7.1 The Director of Customer Services introduced this report the purpose was to approve the formal review of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

- 7.2 She reminded Board that they had approved the current policy in 2005. The aims and spirit of the policy was to ensure everyone has equality of opportunity and access to services. Consultations had been undertaken and a wide range of views considered.

Board members were reminded of their responsibility for ensuring that SLHD delivers the policy effectively.

A Members commented that the effectiveness of the policy will be strengthened by new employees being made aware of the company commitments during the induction process and relevant training.

- 7.4 **The Board approved the report.**

## 8. **Financial Performance**

- 8.1 The Director of Business Planning introduced this report that informed Board of the projected Revenue and Capital expenditure for 2008/09 and the actual Income and Expenditure to date as at 31 July 2008.

### 8.2 **Revenue**

He raised that the Management Fee had been increased by £199,560 to cover the increase in the employers superannuation

contributions from 10.1% to 11.3%.

The agreed retention of 2007/08 surplus amounting to £418k, had been incorporated into the appendices.

The projected revenue outturn for SLHD for 2008/09, at this early stage in the financial year, is an overspend of £262k on a budget of £39 million.

- 8.3 He pointed out Business Planning agency costs are projected to overspend by £34k, this is primarily due the additional costs of employing agency staff.

Within Property Services an increase in the bad debt provision of £50k has also been included as from July due to the higher than anticipated future write-offs of rechargeable repair debts.

#### 8.4 **Capital**

The Decency Programme is currently projecting to spend approximately £54.5m. However, in light of the recent temporary suspension of the one hit packages and windows and doors contracts, the future expenditure projections may change.

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

### 9. **IT Strategy & Action Plan Update**

- 9.1 The Director of Business Planning presented this report to update Board on progress with the major actions in the IT strategy, and provide an updated action plan for the next 18 months.

- 9.2 He summarised by saying that successful implementation of the Optitime system had already seen efficiency savings.

An Options Appraisal on the Saffron housing management system would be considered at the Executive Management Team (EMT) meeting at the end of the month.

He said 2 of the key projects to be progressed over the last quarter have been the strategic review of the Housing IT systems, and developments associated with Performance Management. The strategic review of the Housing IT systems is nearing completion, and an Options Appraisal report will be presented to EMT in September 2008.

It was noted that the action plan at the appendices within the report showed some items that had gone slightly off target but actions have been taken to rectify this position.

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

### 10. **Voided to Decency**

- 10.1 The Assistant Director of Empty Homes and Services presented this report that advised of the findings following a benchmarking exercise of internal decency work completed by the Empty Homes teams on 8 example dwellings.
- 10.2 The Interim CEO asked permission from the Board for further discussions to take place outside of the meeting before the Board made a decision on this report. This was his first day with the company and he had not had chance to speak with SLHD officers with regards to the report content.
- 10.3 **The Board agreed for further discussions to take place outside of the meeting and for the report and any recommendations to be brought to a future meeting.**

## **11. Any Other Business**

- 11.1 Members were reminded of the Board Member Training on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September.
- 11.2 Members were also reminded of the Staff Conference taking place 6-10 October 2008, should they wish to attend any of the dates.
- 11.3 After discussions it was agreed that the offer of 5 race tickets for the St Leger Ladies Day offered by Doncaster Chamber should be kindly declined.

## **12. Date of next Board meeting**

- 12.1 Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008

### **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 19721, 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.

## **13. Repairs & Maintenance Market Testing**

- 13.1 The Assistant Director of Empty Homes and Services presented this report that updated Board on progress with the project for the period January to July 2008.
- 13.2 **The Board noted and discussed the contents of the report.**

## **14. Performance Information (for information only)**

- 14.1 Board members noted the Performance Information.

The meeting ended at 7:40 pm

